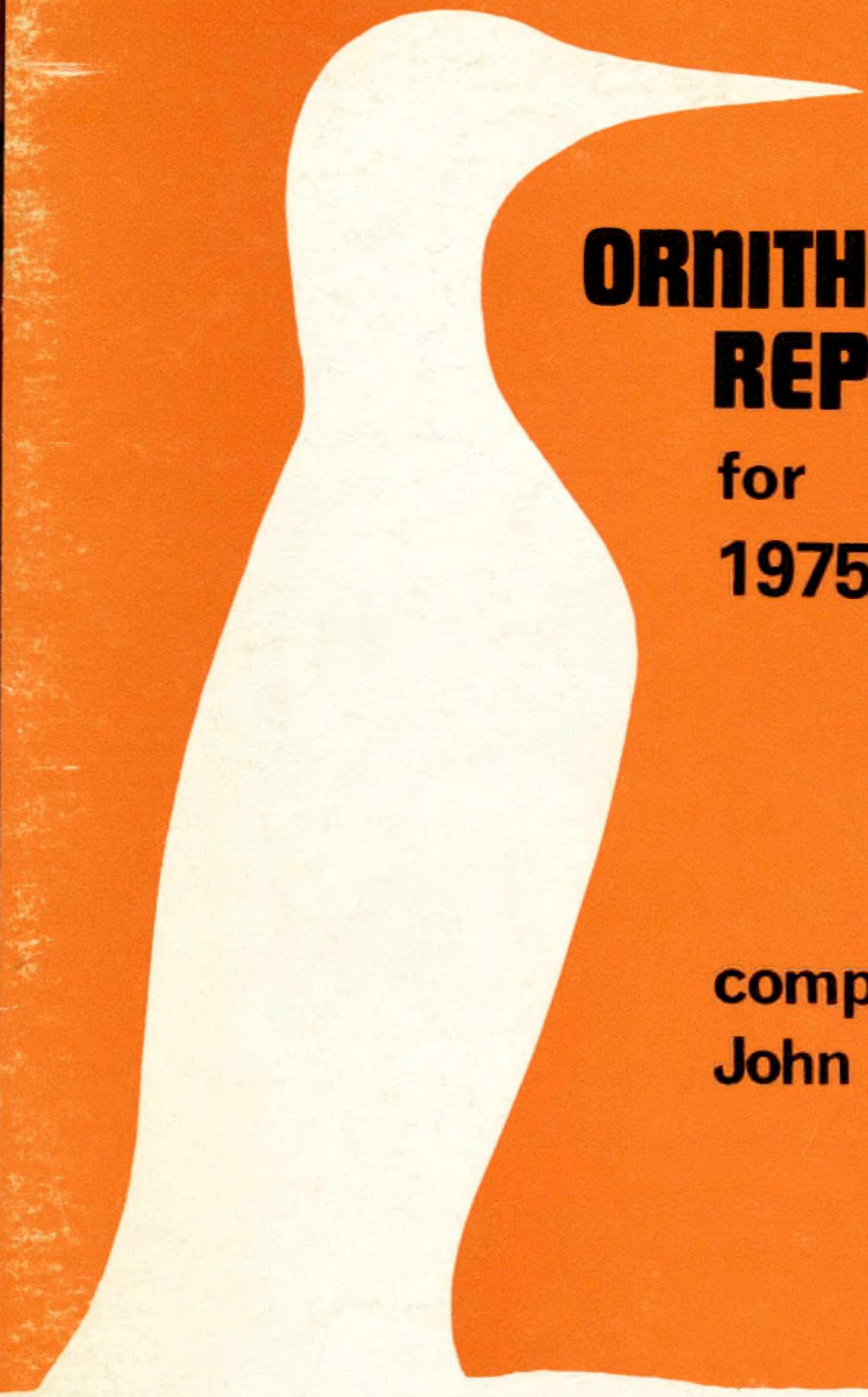
Yorkshire Naturalists' Union



ORNITHOLOGICAL REPORT

for

1975

compiled by:
John R. Mather

DUPLICATE COPIES AVAILABLE FROM THE VICE-COUNTY RECORDERS: PRICE 75p

Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Ornithological Section

Officers for 1975

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The Recorders, together with A. J. Wallis form the Reports Committee.

REPORT FOR 1975 Edited by John R. Mather

This report is written from records which have been submitted to the vice-county recorders. That simple and obvious statement is important because there are surely many other records which never reach us and which may change the apparent status of some species. Every record is important and I appeal for the support of everyone who watches birds and ask them to send their records to the people concerned, whether it be their local society recorder or the county organisation direct. Many records are buried in general statements and summaries but are very necessary as the structure on which to build those impressions. The important thing is that every record is reported to someone. As editor of the county report, I want the picture to be as complete as possible. It is so often the commoner species which are under-recorded and it is just as important to have notes for this category as it is for the rarities.

Co-operation from most active observers was excellent and on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank all those who have sent details of rare or unusual species. For most of these, acceptance was a formality, but I would stress that the system ensures complete accuracy and confidence in our report.

No fewer than seven new species for the county were recorded during 1975; White Pelican, Lesser Golden Plover, Killdeer, Black Kite, Desert Warbler, Yellow-breasted Bunting and Rufous-sided Towhee. Full details of these can be found in the classified list. One of the outstanding features of the year was the spectacular 'fall' of passerines during October. This event has been fully documented and appears elsewhere in this report.

I have not made any special mention of ringing recoveries. There are many ringers in the county and to publish their results would be too great a task. Even to publish a selection of those which reach me would be too biased to be of real value. The local society recorders gave full support to the vice-county recorders and most local reports were of a high standard. I would again remind editors of the accepted species order.

Only four species have been relegated to the 'also occurred' category but if the expense of producing this report continues to increase, these may be more numerous in the future.

I must extend sincere thanks to D. I. M. Wallace, R. G. Hawley and S. C. Madge for supplying the drawings and C. R. Clarke for the photograph. The inclusion of drawings has been welcomed by many people and hopefully, its scope can be extended in the future.

John R. Mather, *Chairman*, Reports Committee, October 1976.

Classified List

All the rare and unusual species in the following report have been considered by the Reports Committee and found acceptable on the written evidence supplied by the observers and have also been accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee where applicable.

The sequence used is that of the 1952 B.O.U. *Check List of the Birds of Great Britain and Ireland* as amended, and published by the British Trust for Ornithology in *A Species List of British and Irish Birds* 1971. The nomenclature follows that of *The Status of Birds in Britain and Ireland*, B.O.U. 1971.

R. G. Hawley drew the Woodlark, House Martins, Pallas's Warbler, Scandinavian Rock Pipit and Hawfinch.

S. C. Madge drew the White-rumped Sandpiper and Rufous Turtle Dove.

Figure 1. Six species new to Yorkshire in 1975. *(top)* Black Kite *Milvus migrans*, Kepwick, 12th May; *(top right)* Lesser Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*, Bempton, 1st September; *(centre left)* Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*, Thorne Moor, 29th and 30th November; *(bottom left)* Rufous-sided Towhee *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*, Spurn, 5th September to year-end; *(bottom right)* Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*, Spurn, 20th to 24th October. Drawn by D. I. M. Wallace (not to scale).

White Pelican *Pelecanus onocratalus*

Excellent views were had of a sub-adult bird on the Humber shore at Welton Water on 16th July by R. H. Appelby, S. C. Madge, D. E. Murray and D. I. M. Wallace.

The birds was in perfect plumage and was not confiding, taking wing readily and flying onto the mud when approached too closely. It can never be known for certain if it was of wild origin but the possibility remains.

Accepted by *British Birds Rarities Committee.*

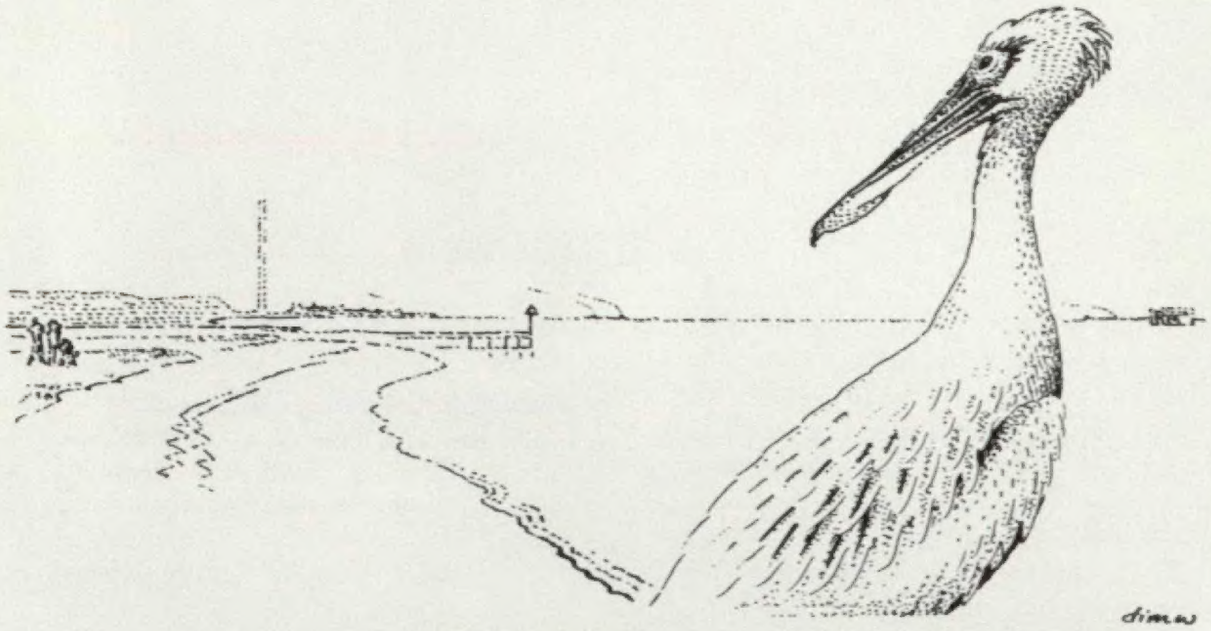


Figure 2. White Pelican *Pelecanus onocratalus* (sub-adult), Welton Water, Humber Estuary, 16th July 1975. A new species for the county. Drawn by D. I. M. Wallace.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

Two on the sea off Hornsea on 4th February, one on 12th February and one on 11th March (SML. DEM). One at Fraisthorpe on 9th February (DIMW), one at Flamborough on 18th December (PAL) and one at Burniston Bay on 28th December (MF).

One flew south at Spurn on 18th September and singles were on the sea there on 22nd and 26th September, 18th October and 1st November.

Addition to 1974 report: One in summer plumage at Whitby on 13th April (GRB).

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Singles at Hornsea on 4th January (WFC) and Filey on 8th February (RHA) were the only ones in the early months.

Singles flew south off Spurn on 9th and 12th September. Two off Scarborough Marine Drive on 8th October (AJW), two at Burniston on 9th November and one to two in the Scarborough South Bay area from 15th November to year-end (RHA. DJB. *et al.*).

Three flew south off Flamborough on 8th November (DIMW) and there was one at Filey on 23rd November and an adult from 6th December to year-end (RHA. JW. *et al.*).

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

Numbers recorded off the coast were remarkably small. 38 off Flamborough on 8th February (PAL), 27 north off Mappleton on 11th February (WFC), 22 flying north off Scarborough on 9th November, 15 on 14th December, 17 on 17th December and 17 on 20th December were the only double figures away from Spurn where the following divers were not specifically identified, but would certainly have been this species: 14 on 2nd January, 17 on 13th September, 40 on 14th September and 20 on 26th September with 14 on 21st October, 36 on 8th November and 17 on 9th November.

Inland records were one at Elland Gravel Pit on 1st and 2nd January (present since

22/12/75) (IM. *et al.*). One at Wintersett Res. from 29th November to 7th December (PS. JSA. *et al.*). One at Bolton-on-Swale Gravel Pit from 13th to 16th February (GDM).

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Breeding records in V.C. 61 were low. *ca.* 12 pairs on Hornsea Mere on 1st June but very few chicks seen; one pair and a chick at Catfoss Gravel Pit, one pair and two chicks at Newport Bridge Ponds. Birds present at five other suitable waters without proof of successful breeding and no birds present at some former breeding sites.

V.C. 62 had very few pairs with Bolton-on-Swale Gravel Pit, Castle Howard, and Scaling Dam the only recorded waters.

V.C. 63 had 36 pairs at 21 waters and V.C. 64 had *ca.* 20 pairs at *ca.* 15 waters.

47 were on Wintersett Res. on 11th April. Hornsea Mere had monthly maxima of 14 in March, 16 in April, 30 in May, 27 in June and *ca.* 10 to 15 to year-end. 32 were on Tophill Low Res. on 9th October (PWI). 80 were on the sea at Fraisthorpe on 18th February (CDRH), 21 at Barmston on 21st February (DEM) and 68 on 22nd December (SML). Smaller numbers (low single figures) occurred on the sea outside the breeding season at several other coastal points.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps griseigena*

V.C.61: Two at Hornsea Mere on 6th January (RGH) and singles at Mappleton on 11th February (WFC), Hornsea on 24th August (IGH. WPB), Bempton on 31st August (SCM), Hornsea on 28th September (RGH), Filey on 10th and 21st October (CRC. RHA). One at Hornsea Mere on 15 dates in October (two birds on 19th), and from 1st to 16th November (RGH. WFC). One at Spurn on 31st October.

V.C. 62: One at Seamer Gravel Pit on 15th August (PC) and one on Seamer Road Mere from 16th to 21st September (AJW. RHA. *et al.*).

V.C. 63: One on Scout Dike Res. on 17th and 18th Auguat (PB. JED. *et al.*) and one at Wintersett Res. from 30th November to 17th December and 24th December to year-end (PS. JMT. *et al.*).

V.C. 64: One at Fairburn Ings on 14th December.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

One at Selsett Res. on 19th February.

One in summer plumage at Bolton-on-Swale Gravel Pit from 13th to 17th April (GDM). One in summer plumage at Fairburn Ings on 31st May (SML). One at Hornsea Mere on 6th October (RGH). One at Filey on 10th October (CRC) and on 30th November (DEM. *et al.*) and one at Tophill Low Res. on 20th October (PWI).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

One at Ingbirchworth Res. from 16th to 24th August (PB. JED. *et al.*). One at Fairburn Ings on 16th September and on several dates thereafter into December (SML. CW. JDP.). One at Hornsea Mere on 1st and 5th September (RGH), two on 11th and 12th September and one on 20th September (DT. MCh. *et al.*).

One flew north at Spurn on 18th November; the first record for the peninsula.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Widespread and common at suitable waters. Autumn concentrations of 20 at Faxfleet Pond on 2nd August, 18 at Staveley Lagoon on 27th August and 26 at Fairburn Ings during August and September.

Winter gatherings were 38 at Wentworth Lakes in January and November, 28 at Swillington Ings on 4th October and 25 at Mickletown Ings on 14th December.

Smaller numbers occurred at many other waters including rivers.

45 pairs bred at 25 waters in V.C. 63.

Black-browed Albatross *Diomedia melanophrys*

Addition to 1974 Report: One off Flamborough Head on 26th October (PAL. IS).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

One flew north at Kettleness on 27th September (PAL. IS). One flew north off Spurn on 8th November (RHA) and two flew north off Scarborough on 9th November during a force 4 easterly with a good sea swell (RHA).

One was found dead at Sutton-on-Forest, near York on 13th October and taken to the York Museum (OHW).

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorrhoa*

Four flew north off Spurn on 14th September and two on the 15th.

One at Eccup Res. on 3rd December was watched in flight and at rest down to 200 yards (SPS).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

Occurrences outside the period May to September were few: one at Filey on 11th February, one at Scarborough on 15th March, one at Hornsea on 19th March and two at Flamborough on 7th October being the only records.

Heaviest movement was in May and late August when up to 25 birds were often seen passing either north or south from the favoured watch-points. Some larger counts were 40 south off Kettleness on 5th July (PAL), 103 south off Filey on 30th August and 38 on 31st (RHA), when 61 flew north off Flamborough (DIMW), and 68 off Spurn on same day. On 14th September off Scarborough, RHA watched for varying periods throughout the day and counted 26 flying north from 0730-0930, 14 north from 1200-1315 and two from 1630-1715, suggesting all day movement which must have involved very many birds.

Birds showing the characters of the Balearic race *P. p. mauretanicus* were recorded singly off Spurn on 28th June, Flamborough on 8th August (PAL) and Filey and Flamborough on 31st August (RHA. DIMW).

Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis*

One flew south off Filey on 23rd August during a light north-west wind (CRC. CB). One flew south off Flamborough on 31st August (DIMW). One flew north off Bempton during a northerly gale on 14th September (SCM).

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

Offshore movements occurred from late July to mid-October, mainly during mid-September. The first big move was on 9th August when 14 flew north and 10 south off Flamborough (PAL. IS), and odd birds were seen at Bempton and Filey, though none at Spurn which is often the case, the birds presumably passing out to sea again before reaching the Holderness coast. The first was not seen at Spurn until 18th August. On 14th September however, 240 flew north off Spurn and 30 were counted off Scarborough during three periods on the same day (RHA).

31 flew north off Flamborough and 16 off Filey on 31st August (CRC. SCM. DIMW). Smaller numbers were seen from most watch-points on many dates during the period mid-August to mid-September.

Times have changed since Chislett wrote in *Yorkshire Birds*: "those who would see this species should put to sea off the Yorkshire coast, preferably in the evening".

Fulmar *Fumarus glacialis*

The Bempton breeding position was again monitored. 434 chicks counted between Red Cliff Hole and Lang Ness, most of the sites having been occupied from 1st January. A few birds remained on the cliffs up to 21st September but as usual the species was absent thereafter until late October (HOB. SCM).

Coastal movements were heavy on some days with maxima of 105 south off Filey on 17th January (SML), 500 north off Flamborough in three hours on 31st August (DIMW), 400 north off Bempton in three hours on 14th September (DEM) and 960 north in one and a half hours on 13th December (RHA). Spurn had maxima of 400 on 30th August and 330 on 31st with 411 on 12th September. 234 flew north off Burniston on 31st August (MF).

Single blue phase birds were seen off Scarborough on 7th and 24th May on which latter date 'hundreds' of normal birds were 'blogging' offshore (RHA), Flamborough on 25th August (SCM), Filey on 31st August (CRC) and Scarborough on 14th September (RHA).

ca. 10 pairs were in Stoupe Brow Quarry in April (JW, RHA). Two were on the crags at Hasty Bank in May and a forester said they had been regular visitors for the past 15 years (GC).

Two were on ledges and four were flying round a peak at Clay Bank, near Broughton, 20 kms. from the sea in June (PH).

One was at rest on a lagoon at Harrogate S.F. on 23rd July (IH).

Gannet *Sula bassana*

Nine sites were occupied at Bempton by *31st December 1974.* 50 were in attendance on 15th February. 104 eggs were produced, 35 from new breeders; 83 chicks hatched and 76 fledged. In addition were 11 unused nests. Maximum number of non-breeding birds was 80 (120 in *1974*). A few remained on the ledges to mid-October but all departed by month-end (JF. HOB. SCM. JWe).

Small coastal movements occurred in most months, the maxima being during August and September. 200 passed Spurn on 31st August on which date 250 flew north off Flamborough in three hours (DIMW). 278 flew north off Scarborough in two hours on 14th September and 202 in the same period (0730-0930) next day (RHA). 309 off Spurn on 15th September and 350 on the 27th.

Six birds occurred inland: one flew over Wadsley, near Sheffield on 5th February (ABG). An adult was found exhausted near Barden Bridge on 20th March. An immature flew over Wintersett Res. on 13th September (PS), an immature was at Blacktoft Sands on 14th September (AG), an immature found exhausted at Crosspool, Sheffield on 2nd October and released three days later at Brighton and an immature was found exhausted at High Catton on 13th October.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The Hornsea Mere tree roost held maxima of 57 on 16th January, 35 on 8th February, 47 on 2nd March, 17 on 16th April decreasing to four by end of May. One to three birds were present during June, July and early August increasing to 12 by mid-September, 30 by 21st November, 44 on 23rd November and 49 on 26th December (RGH).

43 were at Tophill Low Res. in November (SML. DEM), 45 were at Filey on 11th February (SML) and 50 flew north there on 15th September (SML). Southward movement off Flamborough in August when 10 were counted on 3rd and 20 on 31st (DIMW) and off Spurn in September where 15 passed on 13th, 11 on 14th and 18 on 26th with 15 on 22nd November.

30 pairs were on ledges at Ravenscar on 26th July and many were feeding large young. 35 birds were on the reef at low tide and many more on the sea (JWe).

Birds often sat on ledges at Bempton (above 'Blacksmith's Shop') and may eventually breed (SCM).

Occurred inland, mainly singly, at several places too numerous to mention; a few in spring and the majority from August to October but odd birds in almost every month (V.C. 63: 36 records from 18 localities; V.C. 64: 35 records from 14 localities). Seven flew north over Ewden Beck on 4th June and four flew over Doncaster on 13th June.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Filey again attracted large numbers with 35 on 11th February and 70 on 19th February (SML. NAB). 30 were on the sea at Flamborough on 8th March and a further 44 flew north in one hour with 51 flying north in one and three quarter hours on 15th March (SML). 21 were on the sea at Bempton on 26th January and 23 flew south. 40 were in the vicinity of Cat Nab and Scale Nab during August (SCM). 234 flew south at Spurn on 18th November.

15 to 20 pairs are thought to have bred in caves at the foot of Bempton Cliffs. A dead oiled bird at Speeton on 22nd March had been ringed on the Isle of May in August 1974.

Chislett wrote in 1952 "the Shag occurs on the Yorkshire coast only occasionally. . . ."

Inland: one at Grassholme Res. in V.C. 65 on 19th February, one at Leighton Res. on 30th April (PJC), one at Farnham G.P. on 20th May (CJH. JRM), singles at Potteric Carr on 16th September (JWH. MGI), Fairburn Ings on 29th September and 5th October and two at Knotford Nook G.P. on 14th October.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Evidence of movement and possible immigration on the coast in autumn; one flew south offshore at Bridlington on 26th, three north at Bempton on 27th on which date six flew out very high over the sea then turned south. One flew south at Bempton on 20th August, one north on 12th September, one flew over Flamborough Head on 4th September and two were at Kilnsea on 21st September. Four flew over Thorne Park, near Scarborough on 2nd August and eight on 12th August when three flew south at Scalby. Four were on the rocks at Burniston on 26th August and one to four were on rocks in Jackson's Bay, Scarborough from 22nd to 24th August. Five were on the beach at Ravenscar on 20th September.

Occurred commonly in all suitable parts of the county. 32 standing on ploughed land adjacent to the Tadcaster heronry was the largest count reported (SML).

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

An immature bird was at Flamborough Head on 10th October (PAL. IS).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

One at Potteric Carr on 21st August was watched from 1645 hours to 1720 hours by N. G. Ibbotson and N. P. Whitehouse.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Recorded singly at Hornsea Mere on nine dates from 19th October to 16th December (RGH).

One at Fairburn Ings on 25th August (CW. *et al.*).

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

One attended cattle at Aketon, near Castleford on 31st May and 1st June and was seen perched on a telegraph pole (D. Hirst).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

A remarkable series of records at Fairburn Ings on 22nd, 23rd and 24th April when three different individuals were recorded singly on these consecutive dates (SML. CW. *et al.*).

A sub-adult at Rivelin Dams, Sheffield on 6th and 7th June (GS. DH. DG) and what was presumably the same bird near Penistone from 7th to 12th June (MSB. GS). An adult flew down the Humber at Blacktoft Sands on 25th June (AG). An adult at Hornsea Mere on 13th July (RGH. HESW). One flew over Scarborough harbour on 20th July (AB). An adult was at Fairburn Ings on 2nd August (CW. SML) on which data one was at Wath Ings (JH). This bird was colour ringed and had been marked as a nestling in Holland in 1972.

See *The Naturalist* 936, p. 35 for details of the Fairburn Ings birds.

Addition to 1973 Report: One was at Bolton-on-Swale G. P. on 17th July (GDM. WH).

Mallard *Anas phatyrhynchos*

Very common at many waters in the autumn and winter months with the same areas favoured as in past years: Hornsea Mere, 1,560 (Jan.), 2,090 (Sept.); Humber Estuary, 4,800 Leighton Res., 1,200 (Nov.); Fairburn Ings, 1,100 (Oct.); Castle Howard, 1,580 (Jan.), 1,000 (Sept.). To list all the waters which held 200 birds and more during the non-breeding season

would be impossible, but such covered the whole of the county except the north-west where large suitable waters are lacking.

At Fairburn Ings on 4th October, 1,100 were present of which 550 were seen to come in from the east.

Small numbers moving over the sea in July and August off Hornsea and Bempton would be of fairly local origin.

Teal *Anas crecca*

In V.C. 63, 22 pairs were proved to breed at 15 localities (see report for 1975).

The Hornsea Mere maximum of 250 in February was far below the 1975 maximum of 1,400 on 26th October (RGH). The autumn maxima at Gouthwaite Res. were higher than usual, coinciding with exposed mud and were 380 in early September, 450 on 21st September and 400 on 16th November (AFGW). Fairburn Ings' birds also peaked in mid-November with 450 on 22nd.

Elsewhere, numbers were average and widespread, building up in September. Southward passage off Spurn occurred at this time with 113 on 31st August (on which date 45 flew south off Flamborough (DIMW)) and 121 on 7th September as maxima, smaller numbers passing on many other days during the period.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

There was no proof of breeding this year anywhere in the county. The first to appear was a drake at Cloughton Pond on 30th March which stayed to 4th April (AJW. JW). The next were two at Wath Ings on 10th April and thereafter to the month-end with a drake remaining up to 8th June. Two pairs at Almholme on 21st April and one pair until 29th, with three birds on 5th June. One pair at Denaby Ings on 30th April. A drake at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 20th April. In the East Riding at Weel Floods, after a pair on 3rd May, a single drake was seen on several dates to 22nd May with a duck on 27th and on 6th June. A pair on Buckton Pond on 9th May and single drakes at Hornsea Mere on 10th May and Tophill Low Res. on 19th May. Two were on the canal at Spurn from 8th to 10th May. A drake at Staveley Lagoon from 17th to 19th May.

In the autumn, recorded at Fairburn Ings with a drake on 11th August then one to two birds to 17th September. Singles at Wath Ings on 25th July and 9th-10th August and Blackmoorfoot Res. on 29th July with two at Thrybergh Res. from 5th-14th September and five at Redmires Res. on 12th (SJ). One near Ripon on 14th August, two at Faxfleet Pond on 6th August and three on 7th and 8th. A drake at Hornsea Mere from 24th September to 5th October with a duck on eight dates between 20th October and 5th November. (All records listed.)

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

The status was as in the past few years; thinly but generally distributed over much of the southern half of the county (V.C.'s 61, 63 and 64). The traditionally favoured waters were Fairburn Ings and Hornsea Mere with maxima at Fairburn Ings of 45 on 6th September and 56 on 6th October, and monthly maxima at Hornsea of 35 in January, none in February, five in March, two in April, five in May, 42 in June, 20 in July, 80 in August, 106 in September, 123 in October, 96 in November and 68 in December. One brood of seven was seen at Fairburn Ings in June but no evidence from Hornsea.

Numbers elsewhere did not exceed six birds at any one locality except for eight at Bransholme S. F. on 8th October.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Apart from slight variation in actual numbers, the status was almost exactly as in 1973 and 1974. V.C. 61 held by far the largest numbers with 560 at Hornsea Mere in January, 1,000 in the Humber in December, up to 1,500 on the Lower Derwent Floods in January and 2,000 in December as maxima. Tophill Low Res. had 290 on 9th February as maximum over *ca.* 100

to 190 during January, late February and March and 80 on 14th December (PWI). Bolton-on-Swale G. P. in V.C. 62 attracted up to 319 in January and 295 in February (GDM).

Stocks Res. in the west of V.C. 64, is a popular water for the species and had 170 on 18th January, 155 on 8th February, 160 on 2nd March and 120 on 29th December (MVB). 200 were in the Lunedale and Baldersdale Res. areas during January to March.

Blacktoft Sands had 60 on 2nd and 22nd March and 50 on 16th October with a westerly movement of 210 on 10th October (AG). Very few occurred elsewhere in V.C. 63. Smaller numbers occurred by several other waters mainly in the centre of the county.

Bred successfully again at Grimwith Res. (V.C. 64) and a duck was seen with five ducklings (SB). Three broads were hatched at Castle Lough, Lartington in V.C. 65.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Small numbers, usually low single figures, reported from several waters in V.C.'s 61, 63, and 64 in the non-breeding season. Maxima were on the Lower Derwent Floods, with 40 on 1st January, 60 on 12th January, 50 on 1st February and 30 on 12th April; at Fairburn Ings where a party of 27 flew west on 29th September and at Blacktoft Sands where parties flew west on several dates from 26th August with 30 on 4th September, 29 on 11th September, 26 on 17th September and 23 on 2nd October as maxima. 17 were on floodwater near Settle on 28th January.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

The usual pattern of movement in spring and autumn throughout the county and several confirmed breeding records from V.C.'s 63, 64 and 65.

255 at Fairburn Ings on 8th September was by far the largest concentration, maxima at the other favoured waters being: Hornsea Mere, 88 in January, 70 in February, 30 in March, 43 in April, 12 in May, 27 in June, 20 in July, 50 in August, 110 in September, 70 in October, 165 in November and 160 in December; Lower Derwent Floods, 50 on 15th March; Castle Howard Lake, 48 on 10th September, 95 on 23rd September, 40 on 5th October, 56 on 26th October, 30 on 1st November, 40 on 19th November and 56 on 6th December.

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

A full winged drake was on the University Lake at York from 3rd May to year-end (JHL). A drake at Tophill Low Res. in April (DEM) and a drake at Weel from 19th to 22nd May (DEM).

Published with the escape proviso.

One on the River Nidd near Pately Bridge on 20th April was from a nearby private collection but full-winged and therefore a potential problem.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

A pair was at Hornsea Mere on several days in January (RGH). A duck at Fairburn Ings on 26th April (CW. SML) and a drake from 13th to 20th July (JDP. CW. SML).

A duck at Wintersett Res. from 12th to 16th May (PS. AP. *et al.*). A duck on Peasholme Lake, Scarborough on 5th October (MF. *et al.*).

Published with the escape proviso.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Recorded on 21 inland waters in V.C.'s 63 and 64 in all months except April. November and December were the months with most records. One to three birds were mainly involved (mainly singles) but eight were at Wintersett Res. on 1st and 2nd November, eight at Blacktoft Sands on 8th November and eight at Fairburn Ings on 14th December and up to seven at Firth Hill G. P. from 13th to 31st December.

One to three birds occurred on Hornsea Mere, mainly at the year-end and a part of 20 ducks on 3rd December.

Coastal records were few and the only double figure was 16 at Hornsea on 24th January.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

V.C.'s 63 and 64 are the breeding strongholds of this species.

V.C. 63: 68 pairs were reported breeding at 17 waters including 20 pairs at Denaby Ings. Five of the waters were in the Sheffield area and 96 young were fledged from these.

V.C. 64; at least 57 pairs bred at 23 waters. 45 young were produced at Gouthwaite Res. and 117 at Fairburn Ings.

In contrast, V.C. 61 had very few records and there was no confirmed breeding at Hornsea Mere. Two broods were produced at Tophill Low Res.

Late summer build-ups and autumn/winter concentrations involved spectacular numbers with many waters in V.C. 63 and 64 holding up to 100 birds, several up to 200 and a few up to 300 or more. The favoured waters were Eccup Res., Mickletown Flash, Swillington Ings, Malham Tarn, Gouthwaite Res., Wintersett Res., Newmillerdam, and the Sheffield area reservoirs. Some maxima were 305 on Wintersett Res. on 2nd February and 253 on 30th November; 210 on Newmillerdam on 19th October, 390 at Fairburn Ings on 14th October and 283 at the year-end; 222 were on Gouthwaite Res. on 27th July and 231 on 2nd August.

The high altitude Malham Tarn again attracted good numbers: 100 on 12th January, 105 on 22nd February, 100 on 8th March, 57 on 3rd May, 130 on 23rd July, 165 on 14th August, 155 on 27th September and 115 on 20th December (MVB).

In V.C. 61, Hornsea Mere had monthly maxima of 210 in January, 160 in February, 280 in March, 430 in April, 110 in May, 150 in June, 95 in July, August not counted, 500 in September, 430 in October, 405 in November ad and 420 in December (RGH).

Tophill Low Res. also had good numbers with 312 in January, 496 in February, 250 in March, smaller numbers in April, May, June and July, 400 in August, 224 in November and 360 on 14th December (SML. DEM. *et al.*).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Most of the waters which attracted Tufted Ducks, by their very nature also attracted this species. Numbers were generally smaller than the last species but the pattern of occurrence was similar.

190 were on Tophill Low Res. on 9th October. 235 at Eccup Res. on 10th October was the largest concentration ever recorded in the Leeds area. Maximum at Fairburn Ings was 275 on 1st January. Most numerous than usual at Gouthwaite Res. with 110 on 2nd August, 144 on 10th September and 110 on 13th December as some monthly maxima. Malham Tarn held good flocks with 150 on 12th January, 170 on 27th September and 235 on 20th December as maxima. 115 at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 19th January (GDM). 182 at Wentworth on 28th December.

Eight broods produced 49 ducklings aa Fairburn Ings and 14 pairs bred at Mickletown Flash (2), Newmillerdam (1), Potteric Carr (2) and Denaby Ings (9).

Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*

A duck was on John O'Gaunt's Res., near Harrogate, from 1st to 11th January and what may have been the same bird on 16th November and subsequently (DMP. GTF. KM. *et al.*). Two were at Eccup Res. on 3rd September (SPS).

Published with the escape proviso.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Hornsea Mere attracted the largest numbers with monthly maxima of 40 in January, 95 in February, 230 in March and 230 in April. Four present in May, and two in July. 20 in October, 40 in November and 50 in December (RGH). Tophill Low Res. also had a similar build-up in March with 172 on the 7th after 80 on 18th January and 77 on 9th February. This March and April build-up coincides with a reduction in numbers on most inland waters. Many other waters held smaller numbers during the same periods with 60 at Wintersett Res. on 11th January, and 65 on 2nd February, the only concentrations in excess of 50 birds.

Several birds stayed into May and a few through the summer with a drake at Swinsty Res.

being in eclipse plumage by mid-June and remaining into August. Three ducks were also present on 2nd July, flying off to the south-east.

An injured drake stayed at Blackmoorfoot Res. from April to 21st July.

One at Gouthwaite Res. on 28th August was well in advance of the county's main influx in October and no doubt had a different origin.

There was some coastal movement with 48 flying north off Hornsea on 16th February, 32 flying north in small parties off Scarborough on 9th November and 23 flying north off Burniston on 7th December as maxima.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Recorded from Flamborough, Filey, Scarborough and Spurn in January, April and from September to the year-end. Only small numbers were involved, three being the maximum on any one date.

Hornsea Mere had one on several dates from January to 29th May. One on 27th October and one on several dates from 8th November to year-end with two on 22nd November.

Tophill Low Res. had one on several dates from 18th October to year-end.

Inland occurrences were few. Two at Chelker Res. on 30th October (FAW) and one at Stanley S. F. from 23rd to 25th November (CEA. DW).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Records in the early months were few: four flying south at Spurn on 3rd January and one to two birds on five dates up to 2nd March at Filey, Flamborough, Sandsend and Scarborough. One at Gristhorpe Bay on 22nd April.

Occurred at several coastal watchpoints from 22nd August to year-end in small numbers, up to six, the exceptions being eight at Spurn on 20th September and eight on 21st October, and in Cornelian Bay, Scarborough where 16 were present on 22nd November and up to 22 birds during December.

There were two inland records involving three birds: an immature drake at Southfield Res. from 23rd November to 7th December (ML. CW. *et al.*) and two drakes at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 19th July (MLD. GMY).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Coastal records were normal with birds seen in every month, most numerously in November. The largest flocks were 140 on the sea off Fraisthorpe on 9th February (DIMW) and 350 off Bempton on 23rd March (SCM). The largest passing flocks were 125 on 11th April off Spurn and up to 200 regularly during November and 102 north off Burniston on 9th November (MF)! Smaller flocks were numerous.

At Blacktoft Sands birds were seen flying high to the west on 5th August with 180 at 1600 hours, 180 at 2000 hours, 40 at 2015 hours and 20 at 2030 hours, with 42 on 8th August, and 44 on 26th August (AG).

Inland, the species occurred at 27 waters, mainly during April and from August to October, mostly in V.C. 64. Low single figures usually involved but 15 flew south over Ripon on 24th June (DTMcA. CS), 80 flew east at Altofts on 29th July (CEA) and 26 were on Swinsty Res. on 8th November (DMP. KM).

Addition to 1974 Report: line 3, after November add: and Bridlington with 340 on 3rd December and 370 on 7th (SML).

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Occurred at several coastal areas from Ravenscar south to Spurn in all months from January to May and August to year-end (two drakes north off Hornsea on 24th June (SML)), and most numerous during November. Low single figures were normal.

At Filey, the small flock peaked at 12 on 13th December. Up to 17 were off Burniston/Scarborough/Cornelian Bay during November and up to 14 in early December (RHA. MF. DJB). 21 were off Hornsea on 16th February where 96 flew north on 9th November (RGH. WFC. DEM). 39 flew north off Flamborough on 8th November (PAL. IS). At Spurn, 11 were

the Humber on 11th October, 13 flew north on 20th October and 45 were over the Humber on 9th November.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Two ducks at Hornsea Mere during January, February and March with one remaining into April (RGH). One duck present on four dates from 10th November to 20th December *1974* (RGH).

Published with the escape proviso.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Small numbers, up to three, recorded on the coast in all months except August with five flying south off Scarborough on 14th September, a day of much sea movement (RHA).

Inland occurrences were, as usual, scarce and involved one to three birds (January to May and September to year-end) at five waters in V.C. 63 and four in V.C. 64.

Details from the breeding water in the north-west were not forthcoming.

A pair bred on the River Tees, near Piercebridge, and one has done so since 1973 (GDM).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Hornsea Mere figures were again low with 16 as maximum during the first four months. 27 in December was the maximum of last three months. The largest gatherings were traditionally at Eccup Res. and Leighton Res. Maxima were (Eccup) 25 on 19th January, 38 on 23rd February, 48 on 23rd March, 44 on 3rd April, 15 on 29th November and 39 on 27th December on which date 12 flew over nearby Arthington; (Leighton) 52 on 5th January, 59 on 2nd February, 18 on 23rd March, 25 on 20th April, 15 on 11th May, eight on 29th June, 19 on 27th July, 10 on 9th August (none in September) when nearby Gouthwaite Res. had 12), 19 on 19th October, 14 on 16th November and 79 on 14th December (30 adult drakes and 49 *red-heads*).

Other waters in the county, including rivers, had smaller numbers mainly during the winter months, January to March and October to December with maxima of 20 at Lower Barden Res. on 15th February and 27 on 14th December (MVB. FAW) and 57 at Castle Howard Lake on 21st December (JW); 20 were on the River Ribble at Settle on 22nd March (BSh).

Breeding continues and the number of pairs increases. At least seven pairs nested in the Sedbergh area (SOC), three broods (6 . 7 . 3) were on the River Ure near Wensley on 1st June (JH. *et al.*) and four fully grown birds were flightless on 26th July at Leighton Res. when 14 other *red-heads* flew off. A duck had behaved in an agitated manner earlier in the season and may well have had small young (PJC). A duck was on the River Ribble near Settle on 14th June (BSh). At least five pairs bred on the River Tees between High Force and Piercebridge (GDM.RB).

Smew *Mergus albellus*

A rare bird in Yorkshire now.

Only three records: a male on the River Wharfe near Burley on 12th February (AH. PW), a *red-head* at Gouthwaite Res. on 9th November (PJC) and a *red-head* at Langsett Res. on 7th December (RW. JED. *et al.*).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

15 pairs bred in the Blacktoft Sands area and a crêche of 60 young was seen on 17th July (AG). Breeding also occurred at Crabley Creek, 30 birds with some young on 10th June (DIMW); Lower Derwent Valley, seven pairs and some young in late April/May (HOB); Sandsfield G. P., six young on 12th June (SML. DEM), and breeding proved at Welton Waters (DIMW).

Present at several coastal localities in all months, the Humber Estuary holding the largest concentrations: the Estuary enquiry counts gave the following figures: 264 on 12th January,

581 on 9th February, 835 on 9th March, 1,057 on 13th April, 537 on 11th May and 1,164 on 14th December (per DBC). 200 were on Whitton Sands on 14th June (DIMW).

An October increase at Spurn when numbers rose from low double figures to 460 on the 27th. Birds occurred at inland localities at this time with 37 moving west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 3rd September probably being associated; 28 at Southfield Res., 21 at Wintersett Res., and 28 flying west at Blacktoft Sands on 10th October.

Many inland waters had small numbers, usually low single figures, but 11 at Eccup Res. on 9th January, and mainly in spring and at the year-end.

Birds flew east from Spurn on several dates from June to September with 81 on 20th July and 89 on 25th August as daily maxima. Birds flying south offshore during this same period were probably part of the same migration.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

A male frequented the Blacktoft/Whitton Sands area from 4th June into August and a pair was present from 13th to 22nd September. Also present was a South African Shelduck *Tadorna cana*, which no doubt indicated the captive origin of all three birds (AG, LT, DIMW).

Grey-Lag Goose *Anser anser*

It is impossible to separate truly wild birds from the established feral population and the small parties or single birds which occur, often with Canada Geese, during the summer months no doubt belong to the latter category as do some of the winter sightings of small numbers.

The largest 'resident' flocks of introduced birds are at Hornsea Mere and Castle Howard Lake. At Hornsea, a gander paired with two geese and 14 young were reared. The non-breeding birds left the Mere to moult elsewhere. Monthly maxima were: 45 in January, 60 in February, 38 in March, 33 in April, 34 in May, 27 in June, 25 in July, 42 in August, 20 during September and October and 30 during November and December.

40 flew north-west over Ripon on 26th January (CS). At Castle Howard, the species was present in all months with maxima of 29 on 23rd September (JHL) and 25 on 19th November (BGP). 18 were at Sandsfield G. P. on 3rd August and 41 on 14th August. 18 at Faxfleet on 27th September (DIMW). 10 flew south over Scarborough on 26th September (RHA).

Some movement evident in October with 13 flying east over Throxenby, near Scarborough, on 10th (MF), 10 north at Bridlington on 21st (RHA), a skein flew over Scarborough at 2200 hours on 25th and 35 flew in over the sea next day (RHA).

75 flew west at Langsett on 30th November (DM).

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

One flew over the Lower Derwent on 1st January (GS). One at Givendale, near Ripon, with the Canada Goose flock on 1st January and presumably the same bird flying over Bishop Monkton with Canadas on 12th January (RE, JO, *et al.*). Six were in a field near Kilnsea on 1st March (NAB). One at Broomhill Flash from 14th to 19th April (European form) (JH, JMT). An adult flew south off Scarborough on 24th May during a strong northerly gale (RHA).

Two were on Pott Moor, near Leighton Res. on 13th November (per PY) and two were at Castle Howard Lake on 2nd November (BGP, *et al.*).

A flock of 50 geese flying over Knotford Nook in mist on 12th February included some of this species (PJC).

Bean Goose *Anser fabilis*

One was with Canada Geese at Givendale, near Ripon during January and was last seen on the 26th. One was with a Pink-footed Goose at Gouthwaite Res. on 2nd February (JC, CM, FS, *et al.*).

Five geese flying west over Swinsty Res. on 20th November at 0740 hours showed dark plumage and yellow bills and were considered to be Beans (PJC).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

The Humber Wildfowl Refuge populations which peaked at 1,180 on 31st December 1974 suffered a serious mortality from eating dressed grain during early January 1975. The birds fed on newly sown wheat on the Lincolnshire side of the Humber and during the first week of the year it is known that 243 birds died and many more corpses would have been swept away by the tides. It is significant that the Refuge population dropped to 300 birds by mid-January. The dressing concerned was *Trithion*. Full details of this incident have been written up by Brian Pashby in the *Naturalist* 936. pp. 15-18 and should be consulted.

Several skeins moved in January with maxima of 100 at Blacktoft on 29th January, 60 over Harrogate on 30th and 40 flying east over Bradford on same date.

The first to return in autumn were 50 at Crabley Creek on 20th September (BSP) and 500 were on Whitton Sand on 20th October (DIMW). 75 were at Blacktoft Sands on 22nd September and 150 on 11th October (AG).

45 flew south off Scarborough on 21st November (MF) at which time inland skeins were seen: 150 at Redmires Res. on 19th November (KC), 149 flying east over Strines Res. on 30th and 375 flying west at Langsett on same date (DM.JED). 200 flying north-west over Middlewood, Sheffield on 1st December (JK). Skeins were noted over several other areas during November, including 39 west over Leighton Res. on 2nd, 43 over Barden on 10th, four parties over Harrogate on 27th and 30 over Staveley Lagoon on 29th.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

One near Hedon on 11th January and 1st February (DEM) was believed to be from a private collection and was no doubt the one which flew south at Spurn on 23rd March. One at Hornsea Mere with the mixed goose herd from 12th June to the year-end (RGH) could well have been the same bird. Two spent the morning of 12th May feeding on the salt marsh at Blacktoft Sands (AG), they were unringed and wary but the likelihood of them being escapes remains and all records are published with that proviso. In long lived species such as waterfowl, escape need not be recent and adjustment comes quickly.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

The year was a good one for this species and records in the autumn were numerous.

Three flew south at Hornsea on 24th January (WFC). Two flying south off Flamborough on 8th March were later seen passing Spurn (SML. *et al.*).

The forerunner of the autumn influx was an early bird at Spurn on 21st August. 13 flew south at Spurn on 11th October and six flew north off Bridlington next day. Five flew south at Spurn on 16th October, 16 on 20th, 64 on 21st and 15 on 30th. A few birds were down on the Humber mud during this same period. Ten flew south on 9th November and a family party arrived on 24th November, staying to the year-end and being joined by 17 others for the day on 6th December. 15 were present on 10th December, 16 on 18th and 17 on 29th. One bird on the Humber from 17th to 21st October was of the pale-breasted race *B. b. hrota*.

Elsewhere on the coast were 10 (pale bellied birds) flying south off Burniston on 10th October (MF), nine north off Hornsea and later off Flamborough on 8th November (PAL. DEM), 13 south and eight north off Hornsea on 9th November (WFC. RGH) and 17 north off Flamborough on 10th November (DIMW. PAL). Three were on Tophill Low Res. from 28th November to 10th December (PWI).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

The true status of this species in Yorkshire is clouded by undoubted escapes. Such birds occurred mainly singly at Swinsty Res. and nearby waters in October, Castle Howard Lake (2) during January to April and in November and December, the Lower Derwent in March and April, Gouthwaite Res. in March and April, Leighton Res. in November and December, Fairburn Ings from March to May, Bretton Park in March and April, Ulley Res. in December and three at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 6th October. One on Peasholme Park Lake with Canada Geese on 28th October and one by the River Ure in Wensleydale in mid-December.

Four were at Hornsea Mere on most dates throughout the year (see Report for 1974).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

The Canada Goose Study Group were fully active during 1975 and embarked on new projects to shed light on movements. Colour rings marked with large numbers were used in addition to the normal metal rings, enabling identification of individuals in the field. This was very successful and showed that Yorkshire birds returned during the third week of August after moulting on the Beauly Firth in Scotland. The flight to the moulting grounds was undertaken during mid-May.

675 birds were caught, including 315 controls, at 13 waters within a 22 kilometer radius of Summerbridge in Nidderdale during June and July (per AFGW).

Nine pairs bred at Hornsea Mere and reared 23 goslings. Birds moved onto the Mere to moult and after an average of 50 birds during January to May, 130 were present during June and 148 in July with *ca.* 85 to year-end (RGH).

A pair reared three leucistic young on a pond at Azerley, near Ripon and two leucistic birds were in the flock at Castle Howard Lake at the year-end.

By far the largest concentrations were in the usual Ripon/Knaresborough/Harewood areas with 750 at Givendale on 28th December, 528 at Farnham G. P. on 28th September, 398 at Staveley Lagoon on 1st February, 363 at Masham G. P. on 20th September and 408 at Harewood Park Lake on 16th November as maximum counts at these waters. Several other waters held smaller, but significant numbers during the same periods.

The maximum at Bretton Park, V.C. 63, was 145 on 30th June.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Status remains unchanged with the maximum at Fairburn Ings of 108 on 15th July.

The Hornsea Mere moulting herd peaked at 155 in late July, most birds having left the Mere by mid-September.

Elsewhere, widespread on suitable waters with no evidence of other than local movement.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Maxima in the early months were 30 at Mickletown Ings on 1st February, 26 at Underbank Res. on 11th January, 24 at Wath Ings on 2nd February, 25 at Semerwater on 30th January, and 53 at Fairburn Ings on 26th January, by far the county's largest gathering. A few birds lingered up to mid-April with one at Swillington Ings on 27th and three remaining at Fairburn Ings up to 9th June when one left, leaving two throughout the summer.

The bird which had been resident at Treeton Dyke Res. during 1973 and 1974 was not seen after 26th January. The crippled bird which has been at Welbeck Sand Quarry since 1972, was present throughout the year (RLB).

The first of autumn were three at Wath Ings on 11th October, 24 flew west over Blacktoft Sands on 21st October but it was early November when the main influx occurred with 20 over Almholme on the 8th, 11 at Fairburn Ings on the same date, several parties over the Sheffield area from the 8th, eight south at Hornsea on the 10th, 21 at Thrybergh Res. on 12th, and several other waters having their first birds during this period.

Fairburn Ings had 53 during December and 30 were on Semerwater on 21st December.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus bewickii*

As in the last few years, records in the early months were few except for the Lower Derwent Valley where the usual concentrations occurred: birds were present throughout January to 23rd March with 136 on 9th February as maximum of which approximately 1/3 were immatures (JHL. GS. J. & AD). 52 flew south-east at Hornsea Mere on 22nd March. The last spring bird was one at Hunmanby on 26th March (MN).

The first autumn birds were two at Faxfleet on 20th October, 20 over Kilnsea on 21st, six at Staveley Lagoon on 24th and nine at Easington on 25th. Maximum on the Lower Derwent was 33 at the year-end (GW).

Smaller numbers occurred at several waters throughout the county.

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Nine pairs bred in the Sedbergh area (now strictly in Cumbria). Reported singly from *ca.* 50 localities in the western half of the county; V.C.'s 63, 64 and 65. Records in the early months were few, nine singles from nine localities. One over Otley on 23rd June and one at Redmires Res. on 8th June were at the eastern edge of the range for that time of year. Sightings in August, September and October were numerous, mainly singly but two, three and five at Gouthwaite Res. in September, the only area to attract and maintain more than single birds out of the breeding season.

Records in the low ground of the south-east of the county were lacking.

Immigrant birds may account for some of the autumn and wintering records on the lower ground of the eastern foothills. One at Ravenscar on 27th August may well have come over the sea. Two were at Mowthorpe on 26th December and three on 27th (JW. AB).

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Bransdale again attracted birds from January to April with up to five seen in February and seven together on 23rd and 24th March (RHA. BSh. *et al.*), the last being there on 13th April (JED).

Singles were at Blacktoft Sands on 26th January and 1st February, 14th March and 19th October (AG). One at Swinefleet Common on several dates during January. Three on Thorne Moors on 3rd and 5th January and 8th February (IF. CMcK. SLJ. *et al.*) and single sightings on 8th, 13th and 23rd March (DEM. *et al.*). One in the Little Don Valley on 28th March (JL). One at Leighton Res. on 13th March (GTF). One at Whitton Sand flew north on 15th March (DIMW), one flew north at Bempton on 13th April (SCM), one flew down the Humber at Spurn on 20th April, three flew north together at Hornsea on 30th April (RGH) and one flew north at Buckton Hall on 10th May (SCM).

In the autumn, one near Langsett on 12th October (IF. AB) was the only confirmed record although there were sightings of 'probables' in October and November.

Correction to 1974 Report: penultimate line should read: . . . with four on *Thorne Moor* on 15th December . . .

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Continued increase of sightings and several successful breeding records. Single sightings were far too numerous to list; one observer had 83 sightings in the vicinity of Settle during the year.

Scarcest in V.C. 61 from where there were no records in June, July and August. No obvious passage was noted at Spurn but most of V.C. 61's records came from the coast in April and October and these would undoubtedly include migrant birds.

Successful breeding was proved for 22 pairs; three in V.C. 62, ten in V.C. 63, six in V.C. 64 and three in V.C. 65.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Several single sightings at a locality in the centre of the county during January to March and September to the year-end.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

One circled over Kilnsea on 6th April and one flew south on 12th April. One was near Gorple Res. on 28th July and early August (KS. IC). One at Walkley, Sheffield on 1st August (IF) and one at Dinnington, South Yorkshire on 18th August (JSG).

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

One flying over the Hambleton Hills near Kepwick on 12th May was a new species for the county list (C. Bielby). The bird was photographed as it passed over.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

One at Lindley Res. on 15th May (PJC). A dark bird at Dane's Dyke, Flamborough on 17th June flew north towards the cliffs being mobbed by Rooks and Jackdaws (SCM). See figure. A different bird flew north of Hornsea on 18th June (WFC).

Figure 3. Rough field sketches of Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* drawn by S. C. Madge and submitted in support of a bird at Dane's Dyke on 17th June 1975.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

A remarkable series of records from Blacktoft Sands with 20 different individuals identified between 7th April and 3rd October (a total of 194 harrier days) (AG).

Nearby Thorne Moors had five singles, one in April, one in June and three in August. One on Midhope Moors on 31st May and 1st June (DJS. *et al.*). One at Southfield Res. on 13th August (WHP).

One near Goole on 13th April, one at Tophill Low Res. on 10th May (RL. AG), one female south at Bempton on 9th June (SCM), one female at Broomfleet on 27th July (AG), an adult male at Patrington Haven on 24th August (HOB) and one female in off the sea at Bempton on 27th August (PW). Hornsea Mere had single *creamcrowns* on 30th April, 10th, 21st and 31st May and 1st June, two on 2nd June, one immature male and one *creamcrown* on 9th June, single *creamcrown* on 25th June and 24th August, immature male on 2nd September and a *creamcrown* on 2nd October (RGH. *et al.*).

Correction of 1974 Report: para. 2, line 2, should read . . . with a male at *Wath Ings* on 30th August . . .

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Reported as in the past few years, mainly singly from many localities in V.C.'s 62, 63, 64 and 65, mainly in 63 and 64 and from January to April and August to year-end. In V.C. 61 there were only three seconds, singles on the Humber in January and February and at Hornsea Mere in November.

One pair certainly nested in the county and at least two more pairs probably did so.

Montague's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

A *ringtail* came in off the sea and flew inland at Buckton Hall, Bempton on 20th May (SCM). A female at Commondale in V.C. 62 on 20th July (DJB). A male on Thorne Moors on 20th September (AM).

A pair was present in the Scarborough district in June and a pair was on a moor in the centre of the county during most of May but not subsequently.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

One flew east over Howden Res. on 9th April (TI). One at Fairburn Ings on 27th April (FR. BC). One fished successfully at Gouthwaite Res. on 3rd May (AFGW). One was at Lindley Res. on 17th May (PM). One flew north over Wath Ings on 14th May. One flew over

Knaresborough Ringing Station carrying a fish on 17th May and fhsied at nearby Hay-a-Park G. P. next day (RE. JRM. DRJW. *et al.*). One was at Castle Howard Lake in May (per GS), and one fished at Bolton-on-Swale G. P. on 18th May (GDM).

The only autumn record was at Fairburn Ings on 1st September (CW).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Singles at Thorganby on 11th June (GW), Reivaulx Moor on 14th June (DW. JAW), Royd Moor, near Penistone on 13th July (PB), Fairburn Ings on 26th August (SML) and 18th September (RKM), near Ripon on 2nd September (DTMcA. CS), Knaresborough Ringing Station on 11th September (PTT) and at Spurn on 22nd August and 23rd August.

An adult on Thorne Moor on 7th July (SLJ. DEM) and one at another locality in the south of the county during June and early July. Singles at Hornsea Mere on 31st May and 15th June (RGH) and flying south at Bempton on 7th, 8th and 28th June (SCM. DEM).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Two pairs were present at nesting sites in V.C. 65.

Single birds were seen on 20 occasions in V.C. 64, mostly in the western half and mainly during January and from August to the year-end. The only one away from the hill country was at Swillington Ings on 13th April (JW).

V.C. 61 had eight records: singles at Hornsea Mere on 9th June (immature) and 6th August (SML. RGH), one over the sea at Filey Brigg on 13th September (RHA), a male on a pigeon kill at Flamborough on 20th September (JHL), an immature at Filey on 28th October (SML), an immature at Hornsea on 13th and 17th November (WFC) and an immature came in off the sea at Mappleton on 23rd November (WFC).

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Breeding records were again few with only two pairs known to be successful and one probable in V.C. 64 and five pairs (three successful) in V.C. 63. One pair in V.C. 65. There are surely more but the species is obviously scarce now.

Sightings out of the breeding season were numerous and came from all parts of the county most numerously in the autumn and from V.C. 63 and 64. Five were present on Hatfield Moor on 14th December.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Maintains its high population level in all suitable areas throughout the county.

Southward passage at Spurn in autumn had daily maxima of 35 on 26th September, 32 on 3rd October and 23 on the 6th. This passage was reflected further north at Hornsea with up to five birds in late September, early October.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

200 in one pack on Rombalds Moor on 9th November (FAW). A late brood of six about ten days old on Pott Moor, near Leighton Res. on 15th July (PY).

Black Grouse *Lyrurus tetrix*

Visits to Upper Wharfedale to confirm the foresters' report of 150 males in March 1974, showed the species to be indeed numerous. On 18th February, 48 males and 23 females were seen from the road and the whole area of young forestry must hold many more. A check on 24th October showed 20 males and ten females (BSh. SR).

Four males at the Tan Hill lek on 2nd March (DB) and 13 seen in Cotterdale on 18th October (GEA). Stocks Res. area had up to 16 birds in November (BSh) and breeding was proved near Tosside. A male on Pen-y-Ghent on 15th May. A pair near Timble Ings on 22nd February (GP), two males on Rocking·Moor, west of Thruscross on 16th March (FAW) and single males at Barden Moor in March and October (MVB. FAW).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The populations are augmented by released birds and these obviously help to extend the range. Most numerous on the flat lands in the south-east of the county and coveys of 25 at

Blacktoft on 31st August and 28th October, 30 at Hatfield Moor on 20th September, 25 at Askern on 3rd October and 18 at Thrybergh on 12th October were the maxima. 15 were at Ayton Carrs on 27th April.

Numbers elsewhere were much smaller and did not exceed five birds at any locality.

Partridge *Perdix perdix*

The largest coveys were in the south-east with 60 at Blacktoft on 31st October and 50 on 8th November. 40 were regular at Wintersett Res. in the autumn with a maximum of 68 on 17th October. 50 were at Wath during September to December. 50 at Hooton Pagnell in September and 85 at Potteric Carr in November. 84 brace were shot in one day in October at Wentworth Woodhouse.

40 were at Thorlby, near Skipton in October, 30 at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 19th October and 54 at Fairburn Ings on 20th December.

Coveys of up to 25 birds were reported from many other areas.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

One calling at Ayton Carrs on 27th April (RHA). A male flushed at the edge of a barley field at Walkington, near Beverley on 10th July (SLJ. DEM. *et al.*). One calling and seen at Bank Wood, near Bretton Park on 13th July (DB. JB). One calling at Ardsley, near Barnsley from 2nd to 7th July (JMT).

One at Bonneygate, near Easingwold on 7th September (per PH).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Widespread during the non-breeding season and common in some areas: up to 15 at Blacktoft Sands during January and February and 20 during October, and 25 in November and December.

At Fairburn Ings, at least 40 were seen or heard on 15th November. Much in evidence at Hornsea Mere during late September and October. Many places had birds in October and November when the main influx of immigrants takes place.

Breeding was proved at only one place; a pair with chicks at Blacktoft Sands in June, but birds were present during the summer at Hornsea Mere and Fairburn Ings.

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

Fairburn Ings had an interesting series of records in the autumn: an adult was seen on 11th August and by the 17th at least five birds were present. Two to five were subsequently seen almost daily to 21st September (CW. SML. *et al.*). One was at Tophill Low Res. from 18th August to 9th September, being seen on five dates during that period (SCM. DIMW. *et al.*). One was at Seamer Road Mere, Scarborough on 25th October (RHA. CC).

Corncrake *Crex crex*

One calling near Grassholme Res. (V.C. 65) during the second half of May (IF), one calling from cereals at Seamer Gravel Pits on 12th July (RHA) and one calling near Hovingham on 24th July (PH) were the only records.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

A leucistic bird was at Tophill Low Res. on 23rd May (DEM).

Coot *Fulica atra*

The normal flocks in the early months and seasonal build-up in autumn when most of the major waters in V.C.'s 61, 63 and 64 held large numbers, maxima being 1,470 at Hornsea Mere in September, 946 at Fairburn Ings on 12th October and 809 at Wintersett on 20th December. Several other places had from 100 to 200 birds and a few waters attracted up to 300.

One was in Filey Bay on 12th July (RHA).

One found dead at Hornsea Mere on 23rd November had been ringed 170 kilometres south at Blithfield Reservoir, Staffordshire on 23rd December 1973.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Return to the breeding areas in the west was by mid-February when birds were in Wensleydale and in the Ribble Valley with flocks of 25 on 21st February and 42 on 26th February at the latter locality. 33 were at Bolton-on-Swale G. P. on 13th March (GDM). 32 at Morleys Pool floods, near Settle, on 25th and 26th July and the area was clear of birds by the end of August.

Breeding occurred at 10 localities within the Leeds/Ilkley/Ripon triangle, mainly at gravel pits.

Passage birds occurred inland during both migration periods but in smaller numbers than usual.

Coastal movement occurred during late July and August. Spurn had maximum counts of 73 on 20th July and 500 on 12th August, smaller numbers passing on several other dates within the period. 107 flew south off Bempton on 7th August, 100 south off Flamborough in three hours on 9th August and 46 in two and a half hours at Filey on 15th August.

Large numbers on the Humber mud at Spurn were 800 in January, 620 in February, 300 in March, smaller numbers during April to August, 650 in September, 1,300 in October, 1,000 in November and 2,200 in December.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Sutton Moor, near Keighley, which David Hird has studied during the last two years (see Y.N.U. Report for 1974), had 78 pairs nesting with a 28% success rate, the lowest of the three years (45% in 1972, 39% in 1973).

The Lapwing is a very numerous bird in the autumn and winter months and large flocks were too numerous to detail. There were several in excess of 1,000 birds. Six places had 2,000 to 2,500 birds during January to March; Newton Ings, Knotford, Nook, Menwith Hill near Harrogate, Staveley Lagoon, Blacktoft Sands and Almholme. There were 3,000 at Bolton-on-Swale on 26th January, 3,000 at Fairburn Ings on 1st February, 3,000 at Tophill Low Res. on 9th February and 3,000 in the Ribble Valley on 23rd July.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Inland records came from many waters mainly during April and May and from July to September with a few birds in the intervening months and in October to December. Numbers were usually one to five birds but a few places had up to ten. 11 at Wath Ings on 25th May, 11 at Redmires Res. and Blackmoorfoot Res. in August and September with 12 at Redmires Res. on 29th September.

Coastal records were generally low except for V.C. 61 south of Bridlington where there were 80 on the south sands on 29th November and at Spurn where autumn numbers were high with 166 on 24th August and 100 plus on nine other August days and 90 on 2nd and 20th September. Birds passed well offshore at Spurn in autumn with maximum of 55 on 16th August.

Six pairs bred at Welton Water and fledged seven young (DIMW). One pair bred on old railway sidings near Hull.

Three pairs bred at Grimwith Res. in Wharfedale and reared broods of 2, 3 and 3. One pair bred at Staveley Lagoon and reared three chicks and a pair bred near Catterick (GDM).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Confirmed breeding records received were:

V.C. 61: four pairs at four sites.

V.C. 62: none reported.

V.C. 63: 14 pairs proved at 10 sites and single pairs at three other sites.

V.C. 64: 14 pairs at 12 sites (not including Fairburn Ings).

V.C. 65: three pairs at two sites.

The first of spring were two at Fairburn Ings on 24th March with the next at Wath Ings on 4th April and Knaresborough Ringing Station on 11th April. Three places had their first

birds on 16th April after which date the species arrived generally. Maximum seen together was 11 at Fairburn Ings on 31st August.

Most areas were clear of birds by mid-September but odd ones lingered to the month-end and one was at Tinsley S.F. on 16th October.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferous*

A bird on Thorne Moors on 29th and 30th November was a new species for the county list. (S. L. James, M. Limbert, C. Wall).

See *The Naturalist* 939, p. 135 for full details.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

There was only one spring record inland; five at Swillington Ings on 1st February (JW), but the autumn produced more than usual. V.C. 63 had the most birds with records coming from six waters on 15 dates between 31st July and 23rd September. Single birds were involved on all but five occasions; two on three dates, three on one date and 11 flying north at Wintersett Res. on 14th September. September was the month of most records.

Several were at Blacktoft Sands with up to 15 birds in the fields during October and November.

There were four records in V.C. 64; one at Fairburn Ings on 6th September, one near Settle on 15th October (BSh), two at Gouthwaite Res. on 5th October and one on 30th November (PJC).

The Humber Estuary Enquiry counts (Spurn to Goole), showed maxima of 53 on 9th February, 36 on 13th April, 29 on 11th May and 44 on 14th December. 39 flew east at Spurn on 28th May. The Humber mud attracted birds during September at Skeffling and 30 were counted between there and Kilnsea on 16th August (DEM) and 20 were on Skeffling Clays on 4th September (MAH). 20 were at Faxfleet on 20th October (DIMW).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Large flocks were again reported as in 1974. The pattern of occurrences and autumn build-up was normal and several lingering April flocks were showing characters of the Northern race before departure. Many places had autumn and winter flocks of up to two or three hundred, several up to 500 and a few up to 800. The maxims were 2,550 at Tophill Low Res. on 18th January, 2,000 at Swillington Ings on 15th February, 1,500 flying west over

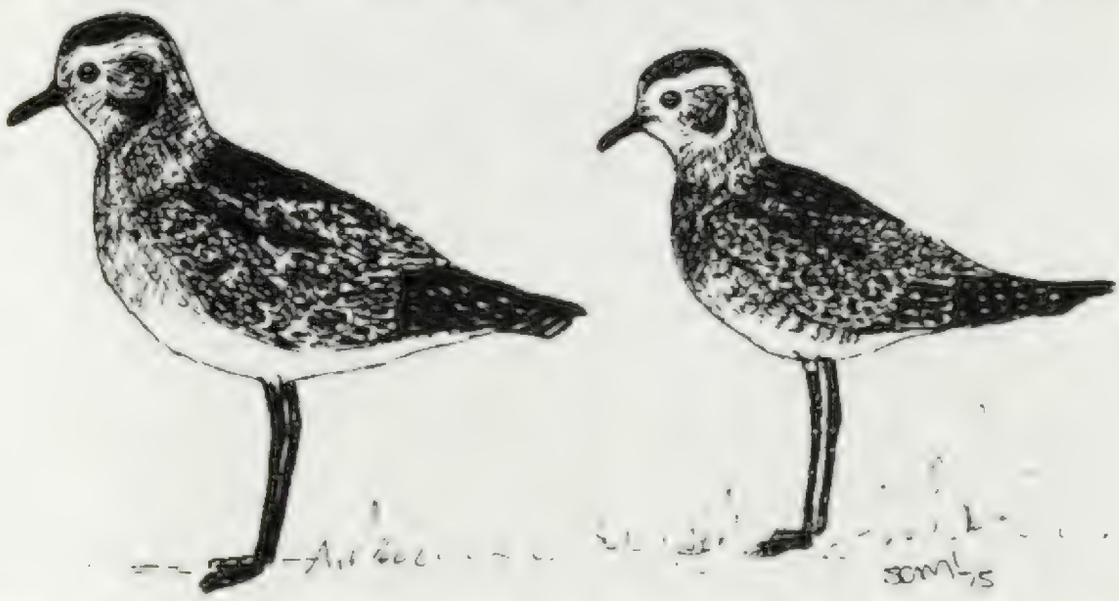


Figure 4. Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* and Lesser Golden Plover *P. dominica*. These sketches were submitted in support of a record of the latter species at Bempton on 1st September 1975. Drawn by S. C. Madge.

Knaresborough Ringing Station on 2nd March, 1,000 on Rigton Moor on 18th April, 1,000 in the Horsforth area at the end of September built up to 1,500 by December, 1,000 at Settle on 21st October and 1,450 on Menwith Hill, west of Harrogate on 30th November.

Lesser Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica*

One was seen by S. C. Madge at Wandale Farm, Bempton on 1st September. It was watched in company with a Golden Plover and 30 Lapwings for half an hour from 1500 hours. It eventually flew, enabling the underwing pattern to be checked and landed about a kilometre away but could not be re-located. It was considered to be of the Asiatic race *P. d. fulvus* and was a new species for Yorkshire.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee. See *The Naturalist* 938, p. 107.

Dotterel *Eudromius morinellas*

One was watched at close range on Baildon Moor Golf Course on 4th May by Mr. and Mrs. H. Nunn. One near High Bradfield from 17th to 20th May (JWA).

Two were at Bempton from 31st May to 2nd June, one remaining on 3rd June (SCM). A report in the local newspaper that Dotterel had been *breeding* in the cliff-top fields should have read 'feeding' . . . typical!

An immature bird at Wilsthorpe on 6th September (RHA. SCM).

One flew south at Spurn on 21st August then returned north and was later found in a field near the Bluebell and stayed until 24th August.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

The large numbers at Cornelian Bay in 1974 were repeated this year with 65 on 30th April, 90 on 8th May, 62 on 7th August, 144 on 14th August, 180 on 7th September and 220 on 16th December (JW. FAW).

As last year, Spurn had high numbers with monthly maxima in January, February and March of 91, 118, and 200. 300 on 13th April, 185 on 3rd May and 100 on 11th May, 280 on 22nd August and monthly maxima in the last three months of 120, 80, and 78. 113 flew south off-shore at Spurn on 16th August. Other coastal areas had smaller numbers with 55 at Filey Brigg on 11th February and 50 at Patrington Haven on 3rd September.

Inland records were numerous: singles at Stocks Res. on 16th May, Hay-a-Park G. P. on 23rd May and Fairburn Ings on 27th, 29th and 31st May (different birds). From late July to late September there were records from ten localities, mainly singles, but some larger numbers: singles at Gouthwaite Res. on 13th July and 19th July, two at Broomhill/Wath on 23rd July and singles from 18th to 21st August, 31st August and 1st September and 27th September. Wintersett Res. had two on 9th August and singles on 31st August and 20th September, one at Swillington Ings on 3rd August, 11 flying west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 18th August, two parties of five and ten on 19th August and eight on 30th August, 11 flying west at Fairburn Ings on 14th August, two at Whiteholme Res. on 3rd September and one at Ingbirchworth Res. on 21st September. Blacktoft Sands had up to six birds from June to early September.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

There were assemblies of 25 to 60 birds in V.C. 61 during the first four months of the year at Hornsea Mere, Wheldrake Ings, Tophill Low Res., Pulfin Bog, Weel Floods and Fighan. 300 at Potteric Carr on 2nd January was the county's largest gathering and there were 150 there from 2nd February to the end of April. 70 were at Swillington Ings in January, 90 at Bishop Monkton on 9th February, up to 96 at Fairburn Ings in January and 84 in February. 120 were at Wath Ings in February and up to 150 in March. 50 were at Blacktoft Sands on 30th March.

Autumn gatherings in V.C. 61 were lacking but V.C.'s 63 and 64 had several. At Wath Ings, 80 on 30th July, 120 on 8th August and 150 on 19th October. 92 at Blackmoorfoot on 1st November and 94 at Redmires Res. on 16th November. 150 were at Hampsthwaite S. F. on 24th August and 185 on 12th October. Smaller numbers, up to 50 were at Gouthwaite Res. in August and at Spofforth and Pool in October.

25 flew in over the sea at Spurn on 30th August and smaller numbers on a few other days.

Great Snipe *Capella media*

An immature bird was watched at Crabley Creek on 6th September by D. I. M. Wallace. This is the first fully authenticated record of the species in Yorkshire this century.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

No doubt the species is overlooked and much care is needed to identify it. Some Common Snipe, especially in isolation, can look large and every effort should be made to follow up suspected sightings in order to view the bird on the ground.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocryptes minima*

There were up to five at Hornsea Mere during January and up to mid-February, three on 2nd April and the last on 18th April. 12 were at Wath Ings on 9th February, 23 on 9th March, nine on 13th April and two on 20th April, the last in the county.

The first of autumn was at Spurn on 14th September with one at Wintersett Res. on the 16th and one at Fairburn Ings on the 18th. Up to six were at Wath Ings at the year-end and seven at Wintersett on 29th November with smaller numbers at several other suitable places and singles flushed at many during the same periods.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Widespread during the breeding season in the western half of the county. A bird 'roding' in June at Hornsea Mere was the first evidence of possible breeding for many years (RGH).

Immigration evident at the coast in October with six at Spurn on 19th and four on 20th when five were also at Flamborough, five at Filey and two in Primrose Valley.

The largest number seen together inland was seven at Aketon Ponds, near Ripon on 27th December (PVI).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Inland wintering flocks were at Gouthwaite Res., with maximum of 52 on 9th February; Chelker Res., with 47 on 27th January and 32 on 6th December; Barden Moor, wwth 35 on 28th December; Bolton-on-Swale G. P., with 44 on 12th January. Smaller numbers occurred at a few other waters.

Breeders returned during mid-February and several areas had migrant gatherings during March: 60 at Staveley Lagoon on 7th March, 250 at Stocks Res. on 8th March, 160 near Malham on 8th March and 200 on 12th, 87 at Midhope Res. on 8th, 50 at Leighton Res. on 28th and 50 in the Lower Derwent during late March. 150 in the Ribble Valley at Settle on 26th February, 400 on 22nd March and 35 on 11th April.

Post-breeding dispersal was underway by late June and in the Ribble Valley at Settle, flocks were large with 800 on 23rd July, 900 on 18th August, 1,000 on 10th September, 600 on 10th October, falling to one by the end of October. Several places recorded small parties passing over, mainly west, during July onwards.

Coastal assemblies on the Humber were large in autumn. At Spurn 377 on 21st August, 450 on 22nd, 600 on 23rd, 850 on 24th, 750 on 25th and 620 on 26th. At Easington, from where the above are thought to have originated after being disturbed by low-flying aircraft, there were 700 on 13th July and 310 on 12th July.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

In spring, birds were seen at 14 inland places, mainly one or two but five over Hatfield Moor on 18th May. The first was near Leeds on 21st April, the remainder being in May.

July was the month of main movement and 21 places had one or two birds on several dates, 12 places in August with seven over Harrogate on 14th as maximum and three places in September. 19 flew south at Blacktofts Sands on 6th August.

On the coast, Spurn had one on 12th April then one to eight regularly from the 18th with low double figures on several May dates with 34 on 31st, 18 of which were seen to fly out eastwards, and small numbers up to mid-June. Daily from 9th July to 13th September with 33 on 10th August as maximum and on several other dates to 7th October with singles on three dates at end of October.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Annual occurrences of this species vary and 1975 was by recent standards a poor year. There were no records at Spurn and only one in V.C. 62, at Bolton-on-Swlae G. P. from 2nd to 5th March (GDM). V.C. 61 had only one in the Humber Estuary Enquiry count on 13th April, one at Hornsea Mere on 6th July and 20th August and six on 24th August. Three flew south at Bempton on 25th July and one on 10th September and one at Faxfleet on 8th August. V.C. 63 had records from five localities; singles at Wintersett Res., Blackmoorfoot Res., and Redmires Res. in August, four at Broomhill/Wath on 7th April, two on 19th and one on 27th and singles on 23rd/24th July and 17th September, singles at Blacktoft Sands on several dates from April to September with two on 3rd and 8th June. V.C. 64: singles at Gale Common on 20th April, Fairburn Ings on 20th/22nd April, Gouthwaite Res. on 23rd July and 15th August and three at Fairburn Ings on 31st May.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Inland occurrences were again numerous: V.C. 63 had birds on two dates during April and on several dates from July to year-end at five localities. Low single figures were normal but 20 at Redmires on 8th September (PL) and eight at Wintersett Res. on 26th July (GJS). Blacktoft Sands had birds on 23 dates, three in April, one in June and the rest from July to year-end with 13 on 22nd April and four in October/November as maxima. V.C. 64 had one at Fairburn Ings from 16th-18th February and singles there on 10th May, 30th August and 14th September with four on 6th September. Eight flew over Knaresborough Ringing Station on 11th May and three were at nearby Hay-a-Park G. P. on 18th May.

There were coastal records in all months except June (three at Spurn on the 1st) and early July. Spurn had good numbers in the early months with up to 33 in January, 60 on 8th February (an isolated peak), 60 on 7th September, 90 on 22nd October and 36 regularly in December as maxima, numbers being generally much smaller. Birds passed south offshore on several dates during July, August and September but only few birds were involved. 55 flew south of Easington on 7th September (DEM.SLJ).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

The pattern of occurrences was normal with birds in all months, most commonly during August; passage starting in late June.

Numbers were normally small and most records were of single birds but there were nine at Almholme on 22nd July, eight near Ripon on 15th July and seven on 15th August, 14 at Wath on 25th September and at Sandsfield G. P. in V.C. 61 there were at least up to 12 birds during early August (DEM).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

V.C. 61 had more birds than in 1974 with one to two at nine localities in several dates during August, four dates in September and one in October, a bird which stayed at Flamborough from 16th to 24th (PAL. IS), and at Spurn there were singles on 18th May, 7th June and from 10th to 14th August.

V.C. 62 had only two records, one near Scarborough from 19th to 23rd April and one at Seamer G. P. on 31st July.

V.C. 63 had seven single birds at seven localities; two in May, one in July, three in August and one in October, and two at Potteric Carr on 6th August.

V.C. 64 had single birds from six localities, two in July, four in August and one in September.

Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos*

The first birds were two at Swinsty Res. on 19th March (DMP) and three on 20th (FAW). One at Sandsfield G. P. on 23rd (DGH). Two at Chelker Res. on 2nd April were also early,

the main arrival being between 13th and 22nd April, five being at Gouthwaite Res. on the 19th.

Most areas were clear of birds by mid-September but a few lingered: Blacktoft Sands on 2nd October, Spurn on 5th October and Fairburn Ings on 8th October.

The bird which was at Lindley Res. in V.C. 64 up to the end of 1974, stayed and was seen up to April. What may have been the same bird was seen up to 30th November. One was seen in the Elland G. P. area from late October to December.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Many birds again spent the winter months at inland localities; eight waters in V.C. 63 had small numbers during January/February and November/December and eight in V.C. 64. Maxima were 11 at Almholme on 18th January and on 14th December, six at Gouthwaite Res. in January and eight in February. At Settle, 60 were present during late January and early February and up to 27 during December. This is now the main inland wintering haunt. Most other localities had one to three birds during the period.

The Humber Estuary (Spurn to Goole) held *ca.* 2,850 on 14th December. 1,000 were at Skeffling on 4th September and 1,000 at Spurn at the same time. Cornelian Bay attracted 432 on 24th February (MF), and 320 in December (FW). Occurred commonly at most other coastal localities.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Occurred in small numbers, mainly singly but occasionally two or three at many places in the county. Monthly distribution of records was five places in April, eight in May, two in June, three in July, many in August and September (mostly August), and one in October with two staying at Fairburn Ings throughout the autumn until November.

Maxima were 12 at Sunk Island on 10th August, five south at Spurn on same date and six at Fairburn Ings on 3rd September.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The pattern of occurrences was normal with a light spring passage from March to May and strong passage from July to September when many waters had one to three birds.

A few occorred outside these months mainly in June, but singles at Wath Ings and Blacktoft Sands in January and February and again in October and November with one at Almholme on 19th October and four over Sutton-on-Hull on 26th October. One wintered at Bolton-on-Swale G. P. (and winters of 1973 and 1974) (GDM).

The maximum, and well above any other total at one place was 20 at Sunk Island on 10th August (ACre). Maxima at inland waters were five at Tinsley, Wath, Blacktoft Sands, Ingbirchworth Res. and six at Castle Howard Lake, all in August. Fairburn Ings had 11 on 9th August and up to 10 into September.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Concentrations in the Humber were 2,420 on 12th January, 4,740 on 9th February, 307 on 9th March and 4,050 on 14th December (Humber Estuary Survey, Spurn to Goole). The only other three figure gatherings were 750 at Skeffling on 4th September, 150 at Patrington Haven on 3rd September and 145 at Filey on 11th February. Of 50 at Cornelian Bay on 21st March, one had a metal ring on the right leg and a red ring on the left (CRC).

Inland, the species occurred during March to May and july to year-end commonly during the autumn and mainly singly but some noteable flocks were seen; 24 flew west at Blacktoft Sands on 3rd August (AG), 12 flew west at Fairburn Ings on 8th September, seven east on 12th September and six west on 7th December. 10 were at Wheldrake Ings on 7th March (DRD) and nine flew west at Wath Ings on 10th March (JMT) where 17 dropped in for two minutes on 20th October (JH).

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Cornelian Bay had large flocks with 250 on 21st March (CRC), 76 on 8th March (JW) and 170 on 16th December (FW). 137 were in Cayton Bay on 22nd April (PD). Filey Brigg, the county's most established haunt of this species had 130 on 17th January, 175 on 11th February, 150 on 26th February and 45 on 7th March (SML. HTJ. DEM). Two on 17th July was the first of the autumn (RHA), 22 on 15th September, 130 on 30th November, 260 on 19th November, 320 on 6th December and 120 to year-end (RHA. IHD. IF). 40 were on Scarborough Harbour wall on 15th November (RHA). 25 were at Flamborough on 16th November (DIMW). 85 were in Robin Hood's Bay on 27th December (DJB). Smaller numbers occurred at a few other suitable coastal sites.

One occurred inland at Broomhill Flash on 8th September (JH. JMT).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Birds were seen at 28 localities; 13 in V.C. 61, three in V.C. 62, 10 in V.C. 63, two in V.C. 64, none in V.C. 65. Records in spring were few and came from only two places; Spurn had one from 25th-31st May and on 11th June and Wath Ings had singles on 15th and 17th May and on 10th/11th June.

Autumn records were numerous and came from many localities, mainly singly but more at a few favoured places where birds stayed for some time: 11 at Welton Water on 29th August (DIMW), five at Crabley Creek on 6th September, five at Brough on 11th and eight at Whitton Sands on 4th September (DIMW). At Hornsea Mere where birds were present from 23rd August to 9th October, there were up to six during late August and four during early September (RGH). Fairburn Ings had eight on 25th August then six to eight until 29th August. Up to four birds were seen on several dates at Wath Ings, Redmires Res., Blacktoft Sands and Whiteholme Res.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Recorded singly at Staveley Lagoon on 15th May (RE. *et al.*), Fairburn Ings on 7th September (CW) and at Knotford Nook on 10th and 13th October (PJC).

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*

One on the Humber at Welton Water from 13th to 15th July (HOB. DEM. DIMW. *et al.*).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

The second county record.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

One was at Hornsea Mere from 11th to 21st September (DEM. DT. MCh. *et al.*). After busily feeding for most of the period, its behaviour changed on the 21st when it was not seen to feed, but sat for periods and often called loudly, becoming restless and finally departing high to the south with Ringed Plover at 1755 hours (JC. CM. JM).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

The Humber Estuary Enquiry (Spurn to Goole) gave large counts of 6,875 in January, 10,995 in February, 9,330 in March, 15,110 in April, 17,408 in May, 13,100 in December. 6,000 were at Skeffling on 4th September (MAH) and 5,000 at Patrington Haven on 3rd September. 1,000 were at Filey on 26th February (DEM), an isolated peak. 1,000 in Cornelian Bay on 26th January and 550 on 16th December (FW). 1,800 on floodwater near Cayton on 25th January (RHA). The lower Derwent Floods at Ellerton attracted 500 on 22nd March and 100 on 12th and 26th April, 250 from 3rd to 10th May (HOB. *et al.*). 650 were at Blacktoft Sands on 30th April and 500 in May (AG).

Many inland waters had birds, mainly at time of passage but in every month. Maxima were 500 on the tidal mud between Goole and Faxfleet on 12th January, 154 on the mud of the River Don between Thorne and the River Went outflow on 23rd November. 57 at Potteric Carr on 23rd March, up to 70 at Redmires Res. in late October and 46 on floodwater near Settle on 9th October.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris testacea*

Many more recorded than in 1974. All records were during August to October and came from 13 inland localities and several places in the Humber Estuary as well as a few coastal sites.

The largest numbers were in the Humber with 27 at Patrington Haven on 3rd September (MAH), 20 at Faxfleet on 4th September (DIMW) and 15 flying south at Filey on 31st August (RHA). Numbers elsewhere were much smaller and generally involved only one to three birds. 10 flew west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 25th August and nine on 8th September (JED. *et al.*). Up to six at Redmires Res. between 30th August and 14th September with eight on 13th September. 13 were at Fairburn Ings on 8th September and eight from 30th August to 14th September. 10 were at Morleys Pool, near Settle on 11th September (BSh).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Inland records came from five waters in V.C. 64; two at Grimwith Res. on 11th May, singles at Eccup Res. on 11th May and 1st August, Hay-a-Park G.P. on 14th and 15th May, Fairburn Ings on 17th May with two on 22nd and 28th May and one on 2nd and 8th June and one at Gouthwaite Res. on 20th July.

The main coastal concentrations were on the beach south of Bridlington with 130 on 25th January, 160 on 25th February, 130 on 1st March, 230 on 3rd March and 139 on 22nd December as maxima.

17 flew south off Filey Brigg on 19th July (RHA).

Spurn had 35 on 29th March and 100 on 17th August as maxima. Southward passage was noted on several autumn dates with 57 on 16th August as daily maximum. 83 flew south in four parties off Scarborough on 9th August (RHA) during a good wader passage. Elsewhere numbers did not exceed 10 at any one locality.

Correction and addition to 1974 Report: line 2 should read . . . Fly Flatts Res. on 3rd June (not July). Add: 190 at Bridlington Beach on 3rd December and 146 on 7th (SML. DEM).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Trygnites subruficollis*

In this year of the Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Yorkshire claimed seven records, some of which may have referred to the same bird.

One at Wath Ings from 28th to 30th August and one on 20th and 21st September (RW. JH. JMT).

One at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 28th and 29th August (MLD. GMY. JED) moved to Deerhill Res. on the latter date (JED) and another at Deerhill Res. from 15th to 17th September (FJR. MLD. *et al.*).

One at Redmires Res. from 10th to 26th September (RTH. DH. DG) and one from 10th to 14th October (KC).

All accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Passage inland, involving only small numbers (below five), was noted at many localities in V.C.'s 63 and 64 mainly during May and August to October but a few in April, June and July. Very few records in V.C. 62.

Maxima occurred in the Humber Estuary with 25 at Sunk Island on 12th August and 19 at Cherry Cob Sands on 25th October (ACre) and 20 at Faxfleet on 7th August. Elsewhere in the estuary numbers were below 10 and generally only low single figures.

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Many more records in recent years than formally and there were at least 10 birds in the Filey/Scarborough area. One at Scalby Mills on 23rd January (RHA) and one on 7th and 8th February (RHA. CRC). One in Scarborough Harbour area from 8th February to 2nd April (RHA. DJB. JRM. *et al.*). One in the Jackson's Bay/Scalby Mills area from 4th to 10th April (RHA. JW. FW), one in summer plumage at Scalby Mills on 15th May (RHA. *et al.*) and one on 7th August (RHA. CRC). One off Scarborough Harbour on 3rd December (RHA. MF).

Singles at Filey Brigg on 8th February, 15th February, 16th to 18th March and 31st March (AMA. DEM. RHA. *et al.*).

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

One in breeding dress at Wath Ings on 13th and 14th June (JH. DJS. *et al.*) and one in breeding dress at Gouthwaite Res. on 18th June (JO).

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*

One was in the Vale of Pickering on 26th and 27th April (FJT. BC. JW. RHA. *et al.*).

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Spring records were scarce as is usual. One flying north off Bridlington on 25th January was an interesting record (DEM. SML). Singles were off Bempton on 3rd March and Flamborough on 8th March and on 17th May (SML. PAL) and off Spurn on 3rd and 17th may. Two at Spurn on 28th June and one on the 29th.

In the autumn, birds were seen offshore from most of the favoured watch-points from 17th July to November. The 'Bonxie' is never numerous off our coast and numbers were usually in low single figures, the exceptions being 10 south off Filey on 30th August, 20 south off Scarborough on 31st August (MF) and 13 south off Filey on 13th September (RHA), 13 at Spurn on 15th September and 24 on the 27th. As with Arctic Skua, direction of movement in autumn varies and can be either to the north or south depending on the wind direction and strength.

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

There have been no large scale movements of Pomarine Skuas off the Yorkshire coast in the present century to match those of 1879, 81 and 86 which were documented by Nelson in *Birds of Yorkshire*.

Small numbers were seen in 1975 with records of singles coming from Flamborough, Filey, Hornsea, Spurn, Kettleness and Scarborough; the most regularly watched places in fact, on 19 dates between 8th August and 9th November. Maxima were four north off Flamborough on 8th November and 12 off Spurn on 17th August.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

The bulk of the skua passage to the northern breeding grounds in spring is not through the North Sea as evidence by the paucity of records off our coast in that period.

In 1975, there were two off Hornsea on 11th March (SML), and singles at Spurn on two dates in late May, and at Bempton and Spurn on four June dates.

Autumn passage started on 22nd July and was recorded on most days until early October with a few birds passing up to 8th November. The largest numbers passed between mid-August and mid-September with maxima of 158 south off Filey on 30th August (RHA), 103 south off Filey on 13th September (RHA) and 73 off Kettleness on same date (PAL. IS) and 185 off Spurn on 17th August, 146 on 23rd, 300 on 31st, 143 on 12th September and 334 on 14th September.

Other places had up to 30 birds, occasionally slightly more but generally fewer on many dates during the period.

Inland records came from Knaresborough Ringing Station where a dark phase adult drifted south on 7th September (RE. JRM), at Fairburn Ings on 2nd November (CW), a juvenile flying west at Wintersett Res. on 27th September (PS), two dark phase adults at Blacktoft Sands on 4th August and three light phase flew west there on 9th September (AG).

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

An immature flew south overland at Bempton on 17th August (SCM). One flew north off Flamborough on 30th August (DIMW) and an adult was at Spurn on 31st August. A juvenile with a badly broken wing was found at Spurn on 14th September (JC. BRS. JRM) and the remains of another juvenile were found there on 12th October (JC. CM. JRM) (both

specimens are now in the J. R. Mather collection, numbers A.63.1 and W.63.3 respectively). An immature flew south off Kettleness on 27th September (PAL. IS) and another flew south off Filey on the 28th (DB. IC. KS).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Numbers at inland waters were high with most places having birds in varying number in most months. Maxima were at Fairburn Ings with 250 on 18th January, 400 on 17th February, 700 on 17th September and an incredible 1,500 on 6th December. Blackmoorfoot Res. had 600 on 1st January and 520 were at Wintersett Res. on 30th November. One found dead at Wintersett Res. on 28th March 1975 had been ringed on Great Ainov Isle, Murmansk, U.S.S.R. on 26th July 1972 as a chick. 1,000 were at a roost on the Humber at Blacktoft Sands on 15th September. Several other inland reservoirs and gravel pits held smaller numbers mainly during January.

On the coast the favoured rocks at Scalby Mills held 800 on 6th December and 200 were in adjacent Jackson's Bay on same date (RHA). An abberant pale bird was at Scalby Mills from April to year-end (see Report for 1974).

Up to 600 were on Hornsea Mere during the winter months (RGH) and large numbers pass over each winter evening to roost on the sea as did 650 on 3rd November (SML).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Numbers in the East Riding were again high with 200 at a highwater roost in Patrington Haven on 10th August. Both races were involved (HOB). 56 on arable land at Skeffling Clays on 16th August were all of the British race (DEM). Smaller numbers were recorded at several other places in the area. Some passed north in spring with 40 at Flamborough (plus 12 others on rocks) on 31st May (DEM. SCM). Scarce in the Scarborough district with only a few records of up to three birds from March to October (RHA).

Inland, in V.C.'s 63 and 64, the species was very numerous: 510 were at Masham G. P. on 12th January, 160 on Leighton Res. on 18th January, Fairburn Ings had 175 in January and 200 in November. Eccup Res. had 350 in January, 450 in April, 850 in September and 650 in December. 220 were at Malham Tarn roost on 2nd September and 220 was maximum at Barden Res. in March. 700 at Wintersett Res. in March, 350 at Blackmoorfoot Res. in March/April and 750 in August and 500 on Blacktoft Sands on 21st August were maxima in V.C. 63, several other roosts having 100 to 350 during the same periods. Redmires Res. had 750 on 5th September, 800 on 2nd October and 1,000 on 15th October (KC).

A pair bred successfully at Nosterfield G. P., near Ripon (AFGW.CS).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

About 1,000 pairs breed on the cliffs at Bempton, where a pure white adult was seen on several dates (SCM).

Common at inland reservoirs, principally at roosts, with 1,300 at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 24th January, 950 at Broomhead Res. on 12th January, 840 on Barden Res. on 15th February and 400 at Fairburn Ings on 29th November. 1,000 were at a roost off Blacktoft Sands during the winter months.

1,200 were at Scalby Mills and 300 at adjacent Jackson's Bay on 6th December (RHA).

Individuals showing characters of the Scandinavian race *L. a. omissus* were seen at Scarborough on 11th January (GTF) and at Fairburn Ings on 22nd November (SML). The latter bird had bright yellow legs and a darker mantle than the British race. This dark mantle, usually combined with a heavily streaked head can be picked out easily when amongst the moninate form and I have seen several on the Yorkshire coast in winter.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Inland roosts were spectacular and Eccup Res. had 2,000 in January, 5,000 in September and 4,000 in December. 2,500 were at Stocks Res. on 8th February and 1,600 at Malham Tarn on 8th March and 1,200 on 2nd September. 1,300 were at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 13th February and 800 during early April. 500 were at Blacktoft Sands during the early

months and 1,000 from 21st August to year-end. 2,300 flew out from Hornsea to roost on the sea on 3rd November. At Spurn on 18th April, 1,500, mainly immature passed south. 1,500 were on ploughed land at Burton Agnes on 15th April and 700 flew east at Driffield on same date. Smaller numbers occurred in many other areas, especially during the spring and from autumn onwards on suitable short turf and arable areas.

A nest with three eggs on a moorland tarn in the centre of the county on 6th June (MVB).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

1975 was an outstanding year for this species.

V.C. 61: 24 sightings, mainly of single birds in the early months up to 30th May and 11 sightings from 26th September to year-end. Maxima were two at Atwick on 18th January, two at Filey on 28th January and three at Sewerby on 21st December.

V.C. 62: In the Scarborough area (Scalby Mills to Cornelian Bay) there were many sightings of one, two and three birds during the early months up to 16th April. At least nine individuals were involved; one adult, five 1st-year, one 2nd-year and two 4th-year.

In contrast, there were only three records at the year-end; one in the harbour on 9th November and singles at Scalby Mills on 18th November and 20th December (RHA. DJB. FW. JW. *et al.*).

V.C. 63: One at Broomhead Res. from 1st to 10th January (DH. *et al.*) two at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 9th April (PB. MLD), one at Wintersett Res. on 15th March (GJS) and one at Wath Ings on 5th, 16th and 30th March (JMT). Singles at Airmyn Rubbish Tip on 26th October (AG), Redmires Res. on 24th November (KC) and Blacktoft Sands on 18th November (AG).

V.C. 64: Singles at Esholt S. F. on 4th and 5th April (DP. *et al.*), Old Bramhope Tip, near Leeds on 12th April (DMP) and Fairburn Ings on 22nd November.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

There were more records of this species in 1975 than ever before in the county.

V.C. 61: Single birds at Hornsea Mere on 4th February and 26th March (RGH). Single 1st-year and 2nd-year birds at Bridlington on several dates between 13th March and 19th April (RGH. SML. DIMW. *et al.*). A 2nd-year at North Ferriby on 5th April and 10th April (DIMW). A 1st-year at Filey Brigg on 22nd November (DJB) and one at Hornsea Mere on 21st and 28th December (RGH). A 2nd-year at Spurn on 18th April, an adult on 26th September, a 1st-year on 5th October and another on 13th December.

V.C. 62: Up to four individuals (one 1st-year, three 2nd-year) were in the Scarborough district from 1st January to 10th May and were seen by many observers (RHA. DJB. HES. *et al.*).

A 1st-year bird was in Scarborough Harbour on 14th November and on occasional dates to year-end and a 2nd-year bird was present from 1st December to year-end (RHA. AJW. MF. *et al.*).

V.C. 63: An adult at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 8th January (DS), a 3rd-year on 16th March (PB), a 1st-year on 29th and 30th March and on several dates to 9th April (PB. JED. MLD). An immature bird at Broomhill Flash on 11th April (JMT. *et al.*).

V.C. 64: An adult at Eccup Res. on 3rd December (SPS), and a 1st-year bird at Fairburn Ings on 16th April (SML).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

An unprecedented year and a far cry from the initial rejection by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee of a typical second-year bird off Scarborough on 12th October 1958 which was watched from a fishing coble five miles offshore by A. F. G. Walker, K. Hardcastle, C. Winn, D. M. Burn and J. R. Mather. That bird was the second county record, the first being a second-year bird at Whitby in November 1895, and was the forerunner of a dramatic change in status to the almost 'taken for granted' bird it is today.

V.C. 61: recorded in March/April, June and July to October. At least eleven birds were involved as under: Immature at Filey Brigg on 31st March (JWh. IF. JR), first-year at

Bridlington from 3rd to 19th April (SCM. DJ. *et al.*), first-year at Spurn on 27th April, second-year in a ploughed field near the Dotterel Inn on 12th June (RHA). Adult in the Bridlington area from 24th to 26th July (SCM). Singles at Flamborough on 17th and 30th August (DIMW). Adult at Skeffling on 4th September, adult at Filey Brigg on 13th September (RHA), adult at Flamborough on 11th October (PAL. IS) and adult at Spurn on 23rd November.

V.C. 62: The Scarborough district including the favoured Scalby Mills attracted the species from 15th February to 24th May and from 12th July to year-end. It is difficult to determine just how many individuals were involved but it may have been well over 10. Six were certainly present on various dates during February/March. Three different adults were present on 20th September and a first-year and a second-year also during October/November. The various plumages of these birds was closely studied by R. H. Appleby and the results are published elsewhere in this report. Many people came to see them and were given ideal opportunities for viewing at what has become the gull amphitheatre of Scalby Mills.

V.C. 63: A first-year bird was watched for ten minutes at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 4th August (PB).

V.C. 64: A first-year bird was at Fairburn Ings on 10th and 14th September (CW. PDK).

Plate 1. First-year Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*, Scarborough, March 1975. Note the heavy bill, dark leading primaries and conspicuous dark trailing edge to the pale secondaries. *Photo.* C. R. Clarke.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

V.C. 61 had many birds, mainly during August/September. Hornsea Mere one to two immatures from 7th to 31st May and 1st-16th June and on all but three July days, the first adult arriving on 8th July. 13 on 26th July with the first juvenile on 1st August. Maximum in August was 30 on 20th and in September, 44 on 19th with 30 on 4th October decreasing to the last four on 14th.

Birds occurred on the coast at several localities during March and August to November.

usually in small numbers, often singly but with maxima of eight at Flamborough on 24th August (SCM), 10 on 11th October and 22 adults north on 8th November when eight flew north at Bridlington and turned inland (PAL. IS. JRM). 22 flew north at Barmston (only two adults) on 12th October (AJW. CRC) and 17 on 8th November (RHA. BF)

V.C. 62 had small numbers, mainly singly in the Scarborough vicinity on several dates during March and May, one in June and from July to November. Maxima were three adults at Scalby Mills on 1st to 3rd August, three adults at the Harbour Sewage Outlet on 17th October and two adults at Scalby Mills on 18th October (RHA).

Singles at Kettleness on 7th and 13th September (PAL. IS).

V.C. 63 had singles at Redmires Res. on 10th August (KC) and 19th October (DG. MH) with two on 12th October. One at Whiteholme Res. on 31st August (AM). Two at Wintersett Res. on 5th August and one on 25th August (PS. *et al.*). One at Blacktoft Sands from 4th to 10th June and one on 12th August (AG).

V.C. 64 had birds at only two places: two at Fairburn Ings on 4th May and three on 11th (CW. *et al.*). One at Staveley Lagoon on 10th June (RE. PTT. *et al.*).

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

The usual large roosting assemblies during the autumn and winter months with maxima of 7,000 at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 18th January, 2,000 at Howdendyke Res. on 1st January, 6,000 at Wintersett Res. on 30th November, 5,000 at Southfield Res. on 19th December and 2,000 at Ringstone Edge Res. during December. Blacktoft Sands had spectacular numbers in autumn with 10,000 on 11th August and 25,000 on 21st August (AG).

Hay-a-Park G.P., Knaresborough had pre-roost assemblies (birds eventually flying off to Eccup Res.) of 7,000 on 4th January, and 4,000 on 25th December. The roost at Gouthwaite Res. peaked at 3,000 on 15th February, Lower Barden Res. had 3,000 on 9th March and 1,000 were on Chelker Res. on 12th March. The Eccup Res. roost had 5,500 in early January, 4,000 on 3rd September, 6,000 by 17th September and 10,000 in early October as its maxima. 12,000 were at the Fairburn Ings roost on 22nd December. Malham Tarn had 1,500 roosting on 8th March and 6,300 on 2nd September.

3,000 birds were on the outer rocks at Scalby Mills on 21st February and 5,000 on 23rd March. Evening gatherings in Scarborough North Bay during late March/early April peaked at 12,000 on 12th April (RHA).

900 flew east at Spurn on 2nd February and smaller numbers on other dates at this time.

A dead bird found on the Humber Estuary on 7th July had been ringed as a chick in Latvia on 7th June 1976, thus casting light on the origin of some of our autumn immigrants.

1,500 pairs nested on Thorne Moors, *ca.* 70 pairs at Black Moss, 150 pairs at Knostrop S.F., 500 pairs on Dallowgill Moor, 115 nests found on Grassington Moor, 12 pairs at Lower Gorple Res., a new breeding area during the 1970's.

300 pairs were on Skipwith Common and 62 nests were counted. 50 pairs bred on Aughton Ings on the Lower Derwent but floods destroyed most of the effort.

There were of course many other established moorland gulleries in the west.

Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*

An adult flew north off Flamborough on 17th May (PAL. IS), one flew west-south-west on 9th August (DIMW) and another adult flew north on 3rd September (SCM. AG).

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Numbers passing at Spurn were fewer than usual but breeding figures elsewhere continue to increase.

A census at Bempton, based on cliff-face counts and estimates gave a total of 53,160 nests between Speeton and Lang Ness. 50 birds and two empty nests on the chalk cliffs at Sewerby on 19th July; a new site. 2,800 nests were occupied on the Scarborough Castle Hill (1,712 in 1974) and the spread continues (RHA).

The complexities of offshore movements are difficult to understand: 4,000 per hour passed north off Flamborough on 15th March (SML) and 4,000 per hour passed south off Filey on

21st March. 700 flew north off Flamborough on 18th October (DIMW) and smaller numbers on many other dates off similar vantage points.

Birds occurred at eight inland waters, one to two birds being normal except for Blacktoft Sands where there were eight adults on 20th March, six on 7th June and 23 on 8th June. Occurrences were found from January to August and in September and December, mainly during August.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Spring records were scarce and occurred between 17th May and 9th June with singles on 5th May and 23rd June. The main passage was during 6th to 9th June when there were birds at nine waters. One to two birds were usual but 12 at Hornsea Mere on the 8th.

In the autumn, several waters had single birds and a few had up to three on various dates between early July and early October. The main passage was during late August and early September. Hornsea Mere had one to five birds on several dates, nine on 6th September and seven on 8th September when seven were also at Fairburn Ings. 16 were at Spurn on 16th August and eight on 27th September. 14 were at Flamborough on 24th August and six on 25th, most flying south but six feeding with Little Gulls.

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*

An adult at Wombwell Ings and Broomhill Flash on 19th June was watched from 1030 to 2030 hours (JH. RW. JS. *et al.*) and was photographed by John Seeviour.

A juvenile was at Fairburn Ings on 25th August and stayed for three hours (CW. JDP. CGV. *et al.*). See *The Naturalist* 937, p. 76. An adult flew south at Filey Brigg on 3rd August (KD).

All accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Most 'white' terns are recorded simply as *commics*, in some cases without any attempt to be specific. The earliest such were five at Spurn on 17th April followed by a general arrival on the 19th when there were nine at Wintersett, three at Wentworth, one at Farnham G.P., three at Fairburn Ings and one at Swillington Ings.

Coastal movements were not as large as in some years past; Spurn's counts were much lower than usual with maxima of 130 on 23rd July, 200 on 26th then smaller numbers until 100 on 8th and 9th August, 150 on 13th, 220 on 16th and 100 on 26th. 200 flew south off Hornsea on 29th July. 615 Common Terns were at Filey in late July (plus 370 Arctic Terns). 45 Commons were at Scalby Mills at 1630 hours on 31st July and 60 on 3rd August.

Several inland waters had small numbers of *commics* in most months from April to October. Wintersett Res. had 11 on 18th May (five Common), Wath Ings had 13 on 18th May (two Common), Blacktoft Sands had 44 Commons on 9th May, Blackmoorfoot Res. had 17 on 16th August, 15 on 17th and 26 on 19th (all *commics*).

Correction to 1974 Report: para. 2, line 4 should read . . . in six parties on *14th August* (not April).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Obviously occurs more numerously than recorded (see last species). 75 flew south at Bempton on 23rd July-and 15 were at Barmston on 24th July. Of 70 terns at Bridlington on 26th July, 60% were Arctics. 14 were identified off Hornsea on 29th July. 30 were at Wilsthorpe on 31st July and 370 were at Filey in late July (with up to 615 commons). 30 off Hornsea on 9th September.

A few were identified inland: Four at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 30th April , six at Broomhill Flash on 9th May when there were two at Eccup Res. Singles at Wintersett Res. on 19th April, Fairburn Ings on 7th May, Staveley G.P. on 15th May (2), Hay-a-Park G.P. on 18th May, Knotford Nook G.P. on 18th July, Gouthwaite Res. on 15th August and Wheldrake Ings on 24th September.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

An adult at Filey Brigg on 26th July (RHA), one at Scalby Mills on 5th August (CRC), an adult at Spurn on 27th August, an immature at Flamborough on 31st August (SCM) and an adult flew south at Kettleness on 29th September (PAL. IS).

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Two at Spurn on 27th April were the first of the year. The next were seven at Spurn on 1st May and four at Easington on 2nd May. One to 25 were seen at Spurn almost daily during the second half of May with 10 on 14th June and good numbers in autumn with 46 on 21st July and 52 on 22nd when birds rested at Chalk Bank at high tide.

A few passed Hornsea with two on 30th April, three on 31st May, two on 2nd July, four on 19th July and six on 29th July. Two were at Blacktoft Sands on 7th June and two flew downstream at Crabley Creek on 10th June.

The last coastal birds were two at Spurn on 23rd August, one south at Flamborough on 24th August and two south there on 25th.

Inland birds were three at Treeton Dyke Res. on 16th May (PW), three at Wath Ings on 29th May (JH), and three at Ulley Res. on 2nd September (PC). The first two records may have involved the same birds but the coincidence of the same three again in September is too much.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicencis*

One flying north at Bridlington on 11th April was the first (DEM) with three at Spurn on the 12th, and the first small arrival on the 15th when four were at Spurn and 20 flew north at Bridlington in three hours (SML). 27 flew north off Hornsea on 7th May (DEM) and small numbers were passing north off Scarborough on 24th May (RHA).

Autumn movement started by mid-July and 90 flew south off Hornsea on 19th and 55 north and 27 south on 20th (DEM). 500 were off Bempton on 23rd July (SCM) and 116 flew south in three hours off Hornsea on 29th (SML). Up to 300 rested on Filey Brigg during late July (RHA). 150 flew north off Hornsea on 9th September (SML).

At Spurn, birds rested on flooded land and numbers reached 1,000 by 24th July, increased to 3,000 by 10th August, 2,000 on 12th and up to 700 at the month-end.

1,300 moved south off Spurn in the evening on 16th August, the only such movement to be recorded there this year.

The last coastal birds were singles at Scalby Mills on 7th October (MF), Sewerby on 11th October (DEM) and at Spurn where there were two on 16th and 23rd October and singles on 25th and 26th.

There were several inland; one at Wath Ings on 10th May and 14 on 21st June which left to the north-east. One at Gouthwaite Res. on 19th April (PJC), one at Knotford Nook G.P. on 12th May (PJC), three at Fairburn Ings on 26th July, a juvenile at Nosterfield G.P., near Ripon on 2nd August (AFGW), four at Wintersett Res. on 30th August and two on 1st September, two at Bretton Park on 7th September and one over Doncaster on 29th September.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

3,395 counted on the Bempton cliffs between Crowe's Shoot and Lang Ness in late June (SCM).

On 30th July, several rafts formed off Scalby Mills on a flat calm sea and many juveniles were included, some being fed by the adults.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

Another good autumn with spectacular numbers off Spurn and several records elsewhere:

Eight flew north off Flamborough on 15th March (PAL. IS) and one flew north off Scarborough on 26th May.

After one on the sea at Spurn on 2nd November, 180 flew north on the 7th, 120 on the 8th, nine on the 9th and 26 on the 18th.

31 were seen off Flamborough on 8th November, seven off Bridlington, and 39 off

Hornsea. Odd birds passed on other November dates with 26 off Hornsea on 18th, and five off Scarborough on 21st as maxima. One was found dead at Scarborough on 12th November.

Two flew up the Humber at Welton Water on 8th November (DIMW) and one was on the River Ouse at Blacktoft Sands on same date (AG).

One was found exhausted at Leavening Beck, north-east of York on 5th November and one was on the main bay at Fairburn Ings on 8th.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

Birds were on the Bempton ledges in force on 1st January, all in breeding plumage (HOB). 12,879 were counted on ledges in late June between Crowe's Shoot and Lang Ness. (11,261 in 1974) (SCM). An almost completely white bird was present (first seen in 1973) and a second schizochroic bird was seen during the year (SCM). Groups of 15 to 20 birds on ledges on 19th October, *ca.* 10% still in breeding plumage but none present on 26th (HOB). A massive occupation of ledges (many more than during the summer) took place on 27th December, most in breeding plumage, and many more were flying about below the cliffs (HOB).

360 flew south off Filey in small groups on 13th December (RHA).

One was at Trent Falls on 12th October (AG).

Black Guillemot *Cepphus grylle*

One in Bridlington Harbour from 5th to 15th April (D. and CS. SCM. DJB. *et al.*). One in Filey Bay on 19th October (JAc).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

70 were on the sea off Flamborough on 8th February (DEM). 1,791 counted on cliffs at Bempton from Crowe's Shoot to Lang Ness in late June (SCM). 1,035 flew north off Flamborough in one hour on 8th August (PAL. IS).

One flew around Trent Mouth at Blacktoft Sands for five minutes before heading east down the Humber on 22nd September (AG).

Rock Dove *Columba livia*

Large numbers of pigeons breeding on the Bempton Cliffs include a high percentage of *pure blue* birds; perhaps 80%. Large numbers frequent the cliffs in August after the seabirds have left and doubtless breed at this time when the cliffs are otherwise deserted.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

340 at Denton, near Ilkley on 27th December was an unprecedented number for the county (MVB). Other large gatherings were 44 at Wentworth Woodhouse on 10th January, 45 at Wintersett Res. on 9th February, 100 at Staveley Lagoon on 15th September (RE), 50 at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 24th October and 60 at Swillington Ings on 13th December (JW).

There were other gatherings of up to 20 birds at a few places.

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

A roost at Hornsea Mere held 6,465 on 6th February (RGH). Emigrants were seen at Hornsea in May with 400 north-east on 25th, 1,200 east on 30th and 910 east on 31st (SML). 3,000 were at Terrington in mid-January (PH). 4,000 flew into a roost on Skipwith Common on 8th February (J. and AD). 2,500 were in the Bradfield/Broomhead area on 26th January. 800 at Weden Beck on 19th October.

1,100 were near Leeds on 8th May, a late date for such a flock but no doubt associated with the emigration from the east coast in that month. There were many other flocks of up to 3-400 during the same period.

A uniform buff-coloured bired was at Buckton during the summer (also seen in 1974) (SCM). Another leucistic individual was in Forge Valley, Scarborough in January which had the upperparts grey to creamy white and a second bird near Scalby on 26th April had a pale cream back and wings (AJW).

A pair bred successfully on a ledge in a gable end in Tennyson Avenue, Scarborough (RHA).

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

First of the year was one at Wintersett Res. on 20th April with one at Knostrop on 22nd and two at Bolton-on-Swale on 23rd. Not generally distributed until early May. A few late birds lingered into the last week of September with the last at Stamford Bridge on 3rd October (TMC), Staveley Lagoon on 4th (RE) and Flamborough on 7th (PAL. IS) and two on Thorne Moors on 12th October (ML).

Birds passed at Spurn in both spring and autumn with maxima of 56 on 31st May and 29 on 7th June. 13 were at Bempton on 20th May (SCM). Passage westwards was noted during spring and autumn at Blacktoft Sands with maxima of 35 on 9th June and 45 on 8th August (AG).

Rufous Turtle Dove *Streptopelia orientalis*

One was in the Warren area at Spurn Point from 1100 hours to 1500 hours on 8th November (JC. BRS. *et al.*). It was considered to belong to the western race *S. o. meena*. The second county record, the first being obtained near Scarborough on 23rd October 1889.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

The species has come a long way since the first county record of two birds in a garden at Chapel Allerton, Leeds on 18th April 1959 which Chislett Square-bracketed in the report for that year. Continues to spread up the western dales and increase in its established eastern area. A few sightings of single birds in the Settle area during the year but no proof of breeding (BSh.). One at Grassington in Upper Wharfedale was the first record for the area (SB).

200 were near Selby in January (PR) and 250 were near Rotherham on 28th September. 170 at Copgrove, near Knaresborough on 24th October and up to 70 regularly at Fairburn Ings. Flocks of 20 birds were common in the south-eastern half of the county and some of up to 50 or 60 birds at a few places.

A bird at Buckton during the year was pale buff, a colour phase which occurs occasionally and resembles the Barbary Dove *S. risoria* (SCM). See *British Birds* 66, pp. 373-376.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

One near Sheffield on 17th April was the first bird of the year with singles at Potteric Carr on 18th, Wharnecliffe, Sheffield on 19th and Knaresborough on 20th. The main arrival period was between 23rd and 27th April when many places had their first birds.

Autumn passage birds were recorded singly at several places on the coast during the second half of August and early September, the last being at Spurn on 6th September and Kilnsea on the 7th.

The last inland were at Knaresborough Ringing Station and South Elmsall on 7th September and Wath Ings on 11th.

Five juveniles were on Ilkley Moor during mid-July, all being attended by Meadow Pipits.

Black-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus erythropthalmus*

One was trapped at Recar on 23rd September and was seen again on 24th (TWF. *et al.*). Although the locality is now in Cleveland, I have included the record here as it is a new species for the old county of Yorkshire, the boundaries of which will be used in the new avifauna *Birds in Yorkshire* to be published soon.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Recorded singly at several places, mainly in V.C.'s 61, 63 and 64 throughout the year.

Records of confirmed breeding were scarce, only one in V.C. 61, five in V.C. 63 plus 'several' in the Sheffield area and five in V.C. 64.

Spurn Point had singles on 9th February (found dead at the Point), 31st March, 5th September, 26th-28th September, 6th and 8th October, 16th November and 20th December. Some of these may have come in over the water.

Snowy Owl *Nyctea scandiaca*

One was watched on Lofthouse Moor in Upper Nidderdale on 15th June (PJC). The bird was seen flying over the heather several times and perched at ranges down to 200 yards.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Widespread reports from all parts of V.C.'s 61, 63 and 64. Records were few in V.C.'s 62 and 65 but I suspect this is lack of coverage, not lack of Little Owls. All habitats are favoured from lowland marsh to fringe moorland.

One was in Park Square, Leeds on 14th and 15th April.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Common everywhere, including suburbia. A recently fledged family party at Pateley Bridge on 22nd August was late (DWS).

The early nesting pair in Valley Road, Scarborough must still be present, a young bird about three weeks old being found on the footpath on 14th March (per AJW), (a half-grown young bird found on ground on 6th March 1971 and see Report for 1970).

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Several different birds, presumably emigrants, were on the cliff tops at Buckton during the first half of April with one on 5th June (SCM).

A large influx into north-eastern England during October was well observed in Yorkshire. The first were at Spurn on 11th, with birds seen on most days up to 26th. One was seen coming in over the sea on 12th, two on 19th and one on 20th. Two were over stubble at Filey on 18th and singles were seen during the next few days at Flamborough, Withernsea, Kilnsea and Skeffling. On the 19th, 14 were seen in the headlights of a car travelling from Spurn to Filey and an injured bird was found on the road (DAR). One flew in over the sea at Scarborough on 25th October and was harried by gulls (CRC. RHA).

Birds were seen into November and December at the same coastal localities. A regular coastal roost near Hornsea held eight on 22nd November, six on 29th November, 12 on 11th December and nine on 18th December (WFC. PAL. IS). Another roost in Holderness held up to 30 birds at the year-end.

The coastal influx was probably reflected at some places inland; up to 12 roosted in hawthorn near Wetherby in November, three were at Fairburn Ings on 23rd November and four roosted at Almholme in December. A presumed migrant was at Whitgift, near Goole on 20th November.

Breeding was confirmed on the Wolds and near York in V.C. 61. Nine pairs proved at six sites in V.C. 63 with birds present at a further six sites.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Numerous in the breeding areas of the west with successful nests at many places, often in young forestry plantations.

Reported from several lowland areas in the winter months, maxima being up to nine at Blacktoft Sands in January, 10 on 1st February and eight in March. Two pairs bred there and one raised six young (AG). Seven were at Adlingfleet on 1st October. Wath Ings had five on 14th February, six on 2nd March and five on 24th December. Up to three wintered at Tophill Low Res.

Coastal movement continued into May and from late August with up to five at Spurn from the 16th, and one to two almost daily during late September and October when several other south-east coastal areas had similar records.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

V.C. 61: Bred as usual on Skipwith Common with three definite territories held and possibly two others. First seen on 14th May (J. and AD. GS).

V.C. 62: A pair near Silpho during mid-June (AJW. RHA. *et al.*). One at Birchall on 19th June and one singing at Broxa on 21st June (FW. RHA).

V.C. 63: Breeding at two sites in the south-west with three singing males at another locality. Up to eight singing birds estimated on Thorne Moors on 6th, 7th and 8th June with three females present and a female on two chicks in July (ML). Six singing males on Hatfield Moor in late May and singles at Blaxton on 23rd May and Potteric Carr on 9th July. Single birds near Huddersfield and Rotherham in June.

V.C. 64: One singing male on Sawley High Moor. First seen on 18th May and present during June and July (MRS. HMJ. JF). One was on nearby Brimham Rocks on 17th June and 20th August (DRP).

V.C. 65: One at Grimesgill on 24th May (PY).

Swift *Apus apus*

The first was at Knotford Nook G.P. on 28th April with the next, 10 at Hornsea Mere, three at Fairburn Ings and singles at Harrogate S.F., Farnham G.P., Wath Ings and Wintersett Res. on 29th. 14 moved west over Hornsea on 30th and 45 were over the Mere on the same date when singles were seen at five other localities. Birds were generally 'in' during the period 2nd to 10th May. 825 flew west at Wath on 18th May. 1,500 were at Hornsea Mere on 22nd May and large concentrations gathered there on several other dates with 2,000 on 29th and 30th May, 600 to 1,000 during June and up to *ca.* 5,700 in mid-July declining sharply at the month-end. Many flew south at Spurn during mid-July with 12,000 on 16th, and 5,000 on 22nd as maxima. Several inland waters had large concentrations during the same period. 1,000 were hawking at Selby on 27th July.

Birds were about inland localities up to mid-September, later records being one at Hornsea Mere on 2nd October, one at Filey on 5th October, singles at Spurn on 9th and 27th October, one at Harrogate on 31st October and the last at Spurn on 2nd November.

Aberrant birds with white in the plumage were at Harrogate on 5th May, Knaresborough Ringing Station on 22nd June and Scarborough on 8th June, the latter having a white tail.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

One flew north over Wheldrake Ings on 21st September (GW).
Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.
One was at Hornsea Mere on 26th August (CHW). (Not yet submitted to *British Birds*.)
Addition to 1965 Report: One at Spurn on 16th May (PFB).
Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Kingfisher *Atthis alcedo*

V.C. 65 was not fully covered, V.C. 62 provided records mainly from the Scarborough district but V.C.'s 61, 63 and 64 were widely reported and showed the species to be widespread and comparatively numerous with records from upland stretches of rivers as well as lowland carrs.

17 were caught and ringed, coming to a small pond, well stocked with Rudd at Knaresborough Ringing Station from July to year-end.

Hoopoe *Upupo epops*

One in a garden at Cawthorne on 8th September (per Mrs. R.D.) and one on Tong Park Cricket Ground, Baildon on 13th September (MB. *et al.*).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

V.C. 61 had only three records: one at Hornsea Mere from 8th March to 1st April (RGH), one at Weedley Springs on 11th July (DEM. SLJ) and one at Hunmanby on 25th July (SCM). Records from V.C.'s 62, 63 and 64 were fairly numerous and 18 pairs were confirmed breeding. There were no records in V.C. 65.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopus major*

Spurn had birds on 8th and 12th September and on seven October dates with two at the point on 11th, three from 12th to 21st and two until 30th and one until 6th November. Five were caught and all belonged to the northern race *D. m. major*.

Status in the rest of the county was unchanged.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopus minor*

Most numerous in V.C. 64, birds, mainly singles, being seen on 40 dates in almost as many localities. V.C. 62 had birds at about ten localities. Four were seen at Castle Howard on 26th April (PR). The only records from V.C. 61 were near York. V.C. 63 had only three records and V.C. 65 only one.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

One at Scarborough on 9th May and another on 10th (FW. RHA). Two were at Spurn on 8th May , one staying until 10th.

One at Flamborough on 8th August (PAL. IS) and singles at Spurn on 17th August, 1st to 3rd September, 5th, 7th and 10th September.

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

One at Spurn on 7th April and one on 17th October. One was at Midhope Res. on 18th, 26th and 28th October (JM. & JED. BA).

One was on open-cast topsoil near Wintersett Res. on 2nd November (JSA. *et al.*) See *The Naturalist* 938, p. 107.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Southerly movement at Spurn was spectacular in autumn with 411 on 28th September, 400 on 30th, 1,000 on 14th and 15th October, 1,500 on 21st, 2,000 on 22nd and 23rd, 3,000 on 24th, 1,050 on 28th, 1,000 on 30th and 600 on 2nd November. Large numbers were moving similarly at Scarborough on 24th October (Spurn's biggest day) (RHA).

Several inland areas had flocks of up to 100/200 during the early months and in autumn to year-end with 1,000 at Wath Ings the only flock in excess of 200. 205 flew west of Knaresborough Ringing Station on 1st October and 176 south-west over Fairburn Ings on 17th November.

Shore Lark *Eremophilia alpestris*

Birds were on the Holderness coast at seven localities during January to April. Easington Lagoons was a favoured area and up to 13 were present during February and 10 on 1st March with smaller numbers seen on other dates during the period. Spurn had up to eight regularly to 1st April, 13 on a few dates (same flock as above), and up to six during early April.

One at Spurn on 29th September was the first autumn bird and there were singles on six other dates with two on 25th October. One was on Castle Hill, Scarborough on 9th October and 28 were on the grassy cliff top at Scalby Mills on 13th February. Up to six were at Filey from 25th October to 15th November and one to three were at Hornsea and Barmston in November.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

The first was at Bretton Park on 12th April with birds arriving at several places from 13th to 16th.

Roosts which were counted (estimated) were at Fairburn Ings with a late August build up peaking at 50,000 on 28th September. 3,000 at Altoft Ings in late August/early September, 5,000 at Wintersett Res. on 25th September, 10,000 at Wath Ings on 1st September, 4,000 at Rosscarrs, Selby on 23rd September and at Blacktoft Sands, the peak was 10,000 on 8th September.

Southward passage at Spurn involved high numbers in both spring and autumn: 1,000 on 20th May, 300 on 13th June, 3,500 on 22nd August and up to 1,000 on several other days, 7,400 on 20th September and up to 1,000 on six more days, 701 on 4th October and smaller numbers passing up to the last on 5th November. Similar movement was noted at other coastal sites during the same periods.

Late birds were at several localities well into October, and some lingered into November: singles at Midhope Res. and Worsborough Res. on 2nd, Blacktoft Sands on 4th, Fairburn Ings on 6th, Swinefleet on 9th, Loxley Valley on 11th and 12th and one at Birstwith in Nidderdale on 11th.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The first were two at Cudworth on 12th April (CG), one at South Kirby on 13th April and Fairburn Ings on 15th April with six at Scalby Mills on 16th and several areas having their first birds during the next few days. Mid-May saw the first real influx when local breeders returned to Hunmanby and hundreds were in the Scarborough area.

Birds flew south along the coast during May and early June with 85 on 21st May at Spurn, 100 on 5th June and 150 on 6th on which date the movement was monitored further north at Bempton and 120 were counted.

Spurn autumn maxima were 700 on 20th September, 625 on 21st and over 100 on five other September dates with 171 on 5th October, the last being one on 6th November. Other late birds were inland at Hackenthorpe and Porter Valley on 1st November, three at Hornsea Mere on 2nd November and one at South Kirby on the 16th but most areas were clear on birds by mid-October.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The first was one at Fairburn Ings on 28th March, the next being at Farnham G.P. on 3rd April, Wintersett Res. on 7th April, Knotford Nook G.P. on 11th April, Knaresborough Ringing Station on 12th April and a more general arrival from the 13th.

2,500 were over Faxfleet Pond on 18th August, 2,000 at Leventhorpe on 19th and 2,000 at Swillington Ings on 25th.

Birds passed at Spurn with maxima of 86 on 16th August and 115 on 20th September.

The Fairburn Ings roost held 10,000 on 26th August. Late birds were at Staveley Lagoon on 5th October, Hornsea Mere and Wintersett Res. on 10th, Hornsea Mere on 11th and Fairburn Ings on 18th.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

One sang near Ousefleet on 5th, 19th and 26th June (FG).

Raven *Corvus corax*

Two pairs in the north-west and birds present at two other localities in the mid-west with a few records out of the breeding season in the same general area, including a family party of five on 5th August.

Carrion/Hooded Crow *Corvus-corone/cornix*

A roost at Hornsea Mere held unprecendented numbers: 550 on 26th January, 70 on 6th February, 400 on 26th March, 140 on 6th May, 210 on 14th May, 80 on 3rd June, 90 on 4th July and 77 on 22nd November.

21 were at Ingbirchworth on 5th October, 14 on Langsett Moor on 11th October and 12 at Blacktoft Sands on 23rd October. A roost near Ripon held 60 on 18th January and 100 on 17th February. Up to 400 roosted at Farnley Park during the winter months and 69 were at Eccup on 15th October. 350 flew to roost near Settle on 2nd January. 12 moved north at Bempton on 18th April and smaller numbers on other dates during the month. Spurn had up to 25 on some September dates and 40 on October.

Hooded Crows occurred at many places, both coastal and inland from January to May and late September to year-end. Coastal birds were most numerous during April and October when passage was recorded: numbers were usually low single figures, the maxima being at Spurn with five on 21st October and seven on 28th. Thorne Park, near Scarborough had eight on 26th January, 11 on 22nd February, 15 on 4th March and six on 19th April. Four were at Sewerby on 5th January and six on 11th October. Inland numbers never exceeded two birds but came from several localities.

Correction to 1974 Report: penultimate line should read . . . A marked *northerly* passage (not easterly).

Rook *Corvus fragilegus*

The B.T.O. Rookery Survey was conducted during the year. A very common species, with large numbers reported from several areas during the winter months: 4,000 at a roost at Hornsea Mere on 1st February (RGH) and gatherings of up to 1,000 at several other areas during the winter months. Spurn had birds apparently on passage with 85 on 2nd November, 74 on 4th and 200 on 5th as maxima.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

At least 30 pairs bred on Bempton cliffs (SCM). 1,700 roosted at Hornsea Mere on 1st February (RGH). Otherwise, commonly reported from all areas with flocks of 500 at Ben Rhydding on 13th September and 600 at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 25th December.

Magpie *Pica pica*

85 were in a roost at Rivelin Valley on 8th February, 70 at Blackmoorfoot Res. in March, 70 at Hall Dike, near Huddersfield in October, 50 at Loxley on 11th February and 59 at Haw Park on 27th December.

40 at Gledhow Valley, near Leeds in October and up to 30 roosted at Adel Dam, Leeds in December.

Common in suburbia where unmolested.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

At Runswick Bay on 15th June, one chased a Willow Warbler, forced it to the ground and picked it up (AJW).

One ate a Slow Worm at Lindley on 19th June (FAW).

Thinly distributed in suitable woodland throughout the county.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

An autumn influx on the coast with *ca.* 20 at Filey on 6th September and several parties on Castle Hill, Scarborough on 21st September. Much in evidence at Filey and the Scarborough area on 27th September and Spurn had 25 on 30th.

At least 300 on Scarborough Castle Hill on 9th October and birds present all along the coast from Filey to Ravenscar, many remaining until the month-end. The birds were very bright blue and clean white (RHA).

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

Six at Spurn on 7th October and singles on 8th and 22nd May have been of continental origin, occurring as they did with an influx of Blue Tits *q.v.*

A mixed flock of titmice at Frickley Park during January included up to 50 of this species.

Marsh Tit *Parus palustris*

The situation which I reported in 1973 and 1974 of comparative scarcity compared with the next species still applies. In V.C. 61 only 5 areas had birds, three of which produced only single records. There appeared to be a slight increase in some areas of V.C. 64 but without a base-line check, impressions are seldom accurate.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Widely reported, especially from V.C. 61 with several records from coastal areas.

A bird on Thorne Moors on 8th February showed characters of the northern form *P. m. borealis* and was watched and described in detail by C. D. R. Heard.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

17 were on Scarborough Castle Hill on 20th October and Spurn had six on 8th October and 10 on 24th.

Several inland flocks of 10 to 20 birds were reported from V.C.'s 63 and 64 and some in excess were up to 60 near Lindley Res. in February and on 16th October. 45 at Harrogate S.F. on 24th August and 35 at Fairburn Ings on 22nd November.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Birds present at the Birdsall site in V.C. 61 (BS. SP). One near Welton on 28th October (AMA). Status otherwise normal.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

No breeding season records from any of the three V.C. 61 sites and only one record of a bird at a former site in February (HOB). Status in the north and west of the county was unchanged.

Tree Creeper *Certhia familiaris*

One was caught at Spurn on 7th October and was still there next day. It was not sub-specifically determined. Dripping, spread on a tree trunk at Knaresborough Ringing Station attracted a bird, or birds, on several days during the winter. Status was unchanged with widespread reports from most areas.

Short-toed Tree Creeper *Certhia brachydactyla*

Addition to 1970 Report: One caught and ringed by C. Carter at Hornsea on 26th October 1970 was a new species for the county (2nd for Britain). This record along with others from different parts of Britain has been under consideration by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee since 1970 and has finally been accepted as a result of research into the difficulties of separating this and the last species.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A pairs had a nest with young, deep inside a Sand Martin's burrow at Mowthorpe in June (MF).

Spurn had its usual autumn increase with 20 to 25 birds in late September and October.

Widespread and common in all habitats throughout the county.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

V.C. 61: Three wintered at Hornsea Mere during the early part of the year and three appeared again in mid-October, two remaining to year-end (RGH). One at Welton Water on 29th January and two on 24th September (CD. RH. SM). One at Saltmarsh Delph on 23rd March (BG). One was at Spurn on 26th May.

V.C. 63: A male at Wath Ings on 23rd March (JH. JMT) and a pair at Mickeltown Ings on 1st April (RLB). The Blacktoft Sands population was again high with up to 250 in January plus 150 in late March, after a snowfall. The first broods were on the wing from 20th May onwards and second broods from 21st June with evidence of a few third broods. The first irruption was on 16th September with regular excited flights and departures during October. 400 were present in mid-November and 350 in mid-December (AG).

Two other sites in the area had birds; at one, there were up to 20 to end of March with birds present during May and June and up to 20 from mid-November to year-end; at the second site, up to 10 in April, a few during the summer and 10 from October to year-end (AG).

V.C. 64: A male at Fairburn Ings on 2nd April and a pair on 12th October (CW). Two at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 18th September (PTT).

Correction to 1974 Report: page 39, last paragraph, line 2, should read: 60 pairs were *mapped* (not trapped).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Autumn flocks of up to 20 birds were not unusual, short grassy areas being favoured. Maxima were 25 at Foggathorpe on 10th July, 30 at Digley on 16th July, 35 at Bradfield on 23rd August and 40 feeding on Rowan berries near Settle on 23rd August. Six were at Filey Brigg on 13th September (DAR).

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Flocks in the early part of the year were most numerous in March when birds gathered for the return migration. Maxima were 2,000 moving north-west over the Lower Derwent on 15th March and 1,000 at Wintersett Res. on same day. 550 at Sawley High Moor on 12th April, 600 at Knotford Nook G.P. on 13th April, and 800 at Redmires on 16th April. 500 were at Mowthorpe on 19th April. Spurn had large numbers, carried over from 1974 with 1,000 on 2nd and 3rd January dropping to 700 by 5th, 500 on 8th and fewer to month-end. 200 on 19th April was last large flock and a few birds lingered to 20th May with one on 31st. Two were at Bempton on 6th and 7th June and one on 8th.

Late birds inland were at Wath Ings on 10th May, Blacktoft Sands on 11th May, near Sheffield on 4th June and in the Rivelin Valley on 14th June.

Spurn had one bird on a few dates from 7th August, then up to six at the month-end and up to four almost daily in September. One at Bempton on 20th/21st August, and two on 27th. One was inland at Rotherham on 30th August (JH). One at Blacktoft Sands on 2nd September, seven at Redmires on 16th, three at Gouthwaite Res. on 20th and four at Eccup Res. on 21st were well ahead of the first main influx at Spurn on 9th October, when thousands arrived in fog and drizzle on a light easterly wind: Spurn had 1,000 and 2,000 were on Scarborough Castle Hill, with many more birds involved in the mass influx. 3,000 were at Wheldrake on the 11th. Another 1,000 arrived at Spurn on the 17th and on the 18th, 1,000 were on the peninsula and 2,100 flew south. A few were seen inland at this time but the real inland arrival was not until 21st to 26th October when many places had large numbers: 1,000 at Settle on 21st, 1,000 at Blacktoft Sands, 1,223 at Wath Ings, and 500 per hour over Selby. All were moving west. Smaller numbers were at several other places during this time.

An aberrant bird was at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 11th April, the wing coverts and underparts being pure white, the latter with large black spots (RE). An almost white bird was at Hunmanby on 26th October (BSP. SP).

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

The autumn influx on the coast was witnessed by several observers. 50 were at Filey on 6th and 13th September (DAR). The main arrival was on 9th October when many *thrushes* came in (see Fieldfare). Thousands were seen coming in at Scarborough on 9th October in fog and drizzle and continued to arrive on easterly winds until the 25th (RHA). 200 were at Spurn on the 9th and 360 on 18th. Other coastal areas had smaller numbers during the same period.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Up to 3,000 roosted in Creskeld Woods, near Leeds during January and February. 400 were at Hornsea Mere and Wentworth Woodhouse during February, otherwise flocks were small in the early months. Some birds stayed well into April, later records being one at Thrybergh on 4th May, one at Bempton on 13th and one at Spurn from 4th to 11th June.

First of autumn were one at Spurn on 29th August and one at Flamborough on 2nd September. A few others occurred on the coast during September but it wasn't until early October that birds penetrated inland with the first major influx. 9th October was clearly the big day and thousands arrived on the east coast with 5,000 at Spurn, 3,000 on Scarborough Castle Hill, 2,000 over Leeds and smaller numbers elsewhere inland. 500 were at Almholme on 17th October and 500 near Scarborough on 20th. A second influx occurred with other *thrushes* on 26th October when *ca.* 200 per hour passed west over Selby and similar movements were recorded at several other places. 300 were at a roost in Primrose Valley, near Scarborough on 7th December (DAR).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

The first and well ahead of the main arrival was a female at Horton-in-Ribblesdale on 16th March (RJW), the next being at Burbage on 31st (DC). The first influx was during the second week of April, almost two weeks later than usual.

A male was at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 3rd April (GDM). A female was at Newton Ings on 5th May. Most moorland areas were deserted by the end of the third week of September but two were at Woodhead in V.C. 63 on 18th October (CRMcK) and a male at Frickley Park also in V.C. 63 on 26th.

Coastal passage involved only small numbers, a few passing to mid-May and in the autumn, no more than four at any locality, from end of September to the last at Spurn on 22nd October.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

100 birds at Bempton on 8th April was the maximum of the March/April spring passage.

Early autumn passage was evident at Bempton from 11th August to 20th September (SCM). On 9th October, thousands came in with other *turdidae* at Scarborough and immigration was in progress with varying numbers until 26th (RHA. *et al.*). 200 were at Filey and 200 at Primrose Valley on 20th October (DAR) and at Spurn there were 500 on 9th October, 600 on 19th and 1600 on 18th.

300 went to roost in Primrose Valley on 7th December (DAR).

Some inland roosts held large numbers with 3,000 in Otley Plantation, near Leeds during January/March and 500 in rhododendrons at Creskeld Hall, near Leeds during the same period.

150 were on a freshly manured field near Knaresborough on 22nd December (PVI).

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Only one March bird was reported; at Houndkirk Moor on the 30th (AC. MS). General arrival was late with no more records until April when one was at Almholme and birds reaching several areas during the next week.

Coastal passage was at its peak during late April and early May with maximum at Spurn

of 60 on 19th April and 45 on 11th May. 28 at Filey on 22nd April (MF), 26 at Cottingham on 2nd May (SML) and 22 between Welwick and Kilnsea on 3rd (DEM. VAL). Most other coastal localities had birds during these periods.

Autumn passage was light with maximum at Spurn being 24 on 24th August. Filey was the only other place to have double figures with 12 on 30th August but birds were evident all along the coast at this time.

Late records inland were singles at Settle on 2nd October, Denholme and Knaresborough Ringing Station on 3rd, Digley on 21st, Blacktoft Sands from 19th to 23rd and at Tinsley S.F. from 23rd to 31st. Birds passed on the coast during the month with late records coming from Easington on 1st and 3rd November.

There were a few birds diagnosed as belonging to the Greenland race *O. o. leucorrhoa* during late April and May with one at Bempton on 8th June (DIMW) and one at Welton Water on 20th September (RL).

A *leucistic* male was at Wath Ings on 31st August.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

The increase in records of the Stonechat which started in the early 1970's continued.

V.C. 61: Recorded from most coastal areas from January to March and from October to year-end with records during the same periods at several places inland. Breeding season birds were few and there was no definite evidence of successful nesting apart from a newly fledged bird near Filey on 19th July after single males there on 2nd May and 2nd July (SML). There was an obvious influx during October and maxima were five at Flamborough on 20th (DIMW), eight at Filey on 21st (DAR), six at Bempton on 26th (HOB) and up to six at Hornsea during the month. Spurn had more birds over a longer period, i.e. up to April and from August to year-end with maxima of five on 8th January and in mid-March. Up to 16 were present in mid-October with 15 on 27th. Eight on 20th December and nine on 22nd.

V.C. 62: The same pattern as above but with more records in April. A pair at Jugger Howe probably bred (last year's site). A male on Strensall Common on 11th May (JWh). One to three birds at several coastal places from September to year-end.

V.C. 63: Breeding was proved for six pairs in six localities (three old sites, three new). One to five at 17 localities in the early months and many records at the year-end with one to seven at 36 places with maxima of seven at Blacktoft Sands and eight at Wath Ings and Agden. Some records were the first for 20 years in a few areas.

V.C. 64: Widely reported during the same periods with a marked increase during October. Successful breeding records came from Barden Moor (one pair, two broods) and Ilkley Moor (two pairs). A pair was at Drax and a pair near Settle in May but no breeding was proved. Nine males and six females were at Barden Moor on 2nd February (FAW). Most records came from Upper and Lower Nidderdale, the Leeds area, Settle and Wharfedale. Up to three were at Fairburn Ings at the year-end.

V.C. 65: Again, this area was under recorded and the only record is of one at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. from 3rd April to 25th May (GDM).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

The first and early was at Scalby Manor, near Scarborough on 9th April (FW). The next was a male at Bempton on 19th and at Spurn and Fraisthorpe on 22nd. Inland areas had their first birds during the last week of April.

Breeding records came from all parts of the county.

Autumn passage was noted at several coastal localities with maxima at Spurn of 12 on 15th August, 15 on 17th August, 33 on 7th September and 10 on 30th September and at Bempton of 12 on 23rd August, 15 on 30th August, 12 on 1st September, 15 on 11th September and 10 on 20th September.

A few late birds lingered into early October with one at Stamford Bridge on 18th, the last inland record except for an exceptional bird at Selby from 5th November to 11th December (caught and ringed on 8th November) (PR), and singles at Easington on 16th October, Filey on 18th, Hornsea and Spurn on 19th with one at the latter on 26th and three on 27th.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

The first was at Hayburn Wyke on 11th April with the next at Hornsea on 16th and near Huddersfield on 18th. Widespread inland from 20th April.

Still thin on the ground in several areas but a suggestion of population improvement in Nidderdale and five pairs bred on Strensall Common.

Birds were clear of most inland areas by mid-September. A few later records during October were probably of non-British origin and came from Digley Res. and Blackmoorfoot Res. on 3rd, Midhopestones and Langsett on 18th and at Hensall, near Castleford on 4th November. Coastal occurrences during the same period were at Spurn to the 24th with up to nine birds, and one on 2nd and 3rd November, Scarborough during the 9th to 15th October and Filey on 28th October.

A very late male was at Fairburn Ings on 29th December (LAT).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Single birds were reported during March to May at several coastal localities, and at Spurn there were up to eight in mid-April. A second year male was at Bempton on 9th June (SCM).

First autumn bird was at Spurn on 12th October then up to four birds to early November, whereafter one to two occurred on a few dates to year-end. Some other coastal localities had single birds during the same period.

Inland records came only from V.C. 63: A male at Elland G.P. on 12th April (TK), one at Burbage on 2nd November (MS), Digley Res. on 13th November (EP) and South Kirby on 29th November (IF).

One pair raised two broods in the south of the county, another female deserted three infertile eggs and males were singing at two other localities.

Correction to 1974 Report: First para: penultimate line should read . . . was at Bempton *1st May* (not 8th).

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

One sang in a wood near York for about three weeks in May (J. and AD).

Two singing males on Thorne Moor during May (AG. ML). One singing male on Hatfield Moor from 2nd to 10th and on 28th May and another male singing near Doncaster on 5th June.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

A male at Spurn on 18th/19th May and a female from 26th to 29th. In autumn, Spurn had one on 12th October, two on 13th, one on 17th with a male on 9th November and another male from 16th to 18th November. All the males belonged to the Red-spotted race *L. s. svecica.*

One was at Fairburn Ings on 12th and 13th October (CW. RKM. RTP).

A male of the white-spotted race *L. s. cyanecula* was at Bempton on 8th June (JB. SH. HL. GBS).

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Many immigrants were on Scarborough Castle Hill on 9th October with many other 'fall' migrants (RHA). Spurn had a spectacular influx on 19th October when 200 were on the peninsula and 100 on 20th/21st. 100 were in Primrose Valley near Filey and 20 were at Hornsea Mere on 20th October (DAR. RGH). Smaller numbers were evident at other coastal localities during this period.

Grasshopper Warbler *Lucustella naevia*

Very few records in V.C. 61 and only one in the east, at Speeton on 19th June (SCM). Birds present in June and July on Skipwith and Allerthorpe Commons. Birds were more generally distributed in V.C.'s 62, 63 and 64, the first of the year being at Darlington on 23rd April (GDM) and Wath on 24th (JH).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Very much a bird of the south eastern quarter of the county and hopefully, the survey carried out during 1974/75 (and 76) will plot the exact distribution and what is perhaps more important, the apparent vegetative reasons for that distribution (results will be published in 1977). One which sang near Ripon from 3rd May to 2nd August was out of the usual range (DTMcA. CS).

The first of the year were three at Blacktoft Sands on 23rd April where later, 220 singing males were counted in May/early June (AG). The next were at Hornsea Mere on 26th April. A few birds lingered into October with singles at Hornsea Mere on 9th, Blacktoft Sands on 11th and two at Potteric Carr on 31st.

A bird ringed at Selby on 27th August was retrapped at Dungeness on 17th September (PR).

Blyth's Reed Warbler *Acroceophalus dumetorum*

One was watched at Filey Brigg on 30th August and excellent views were obtained and descriptions and sketches made by R. H. Appleby. The record was accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee and was the second county record of this rare Asian and North-east European warbler, the first being shot at Spurn on 20th September 1912 by J. K. Stanford.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Widespread breeding records from all parts of the county. The earliest to arrive were at Wintersett Res. and Worsborough Res. on 20th April with one at Fairburn Ings on 22nd and a more general arrival from the 23rd.

Small passage on the coast in August and September with a daily maxima of 14 at Spurn in August. A few stayed into October with singles at Blacktoft Sands on 2nd, Stamford Bridge on 3rd, Wintersett Res. on 7th and Potteric Carr on 11th.

Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*

One at Spurn from 9th to 11th August was caught on the first date. The third county record.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

Singles at Spurn on 11th and 13th August and 16th September. One was at Bempton on 11th/12th August and a different bird on 14th (SCM. RGH). One at Filey on 16th/17th August (RHA. DGB) and one at Kilnsea on 29th August.

One stayed in a wooded ravine near Scarborough from 2nd to 14th July and sang strongly during the period. Tape recordings were made and good views were obtained as it sang from the leaf canopy (MF. RHA. DJB. SCM. JW. FAW).

I consider this species a likely candidate for future colonisation as a breeding bird.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Several birds overwintered and records came from 17 places in the Harrogate, Keighley, Leeds triangle during November to February, at Scarborough on 27th January and Selby on 8th November (PR). Several records in March may have been early migrants, possibly over-wintering birds from further south in Britain moving up. The first real influx came during mid-April. One was at Spurn on 1st January and up to four on several dates in November and one on 6th/7th December. Coastal passage occurred on many October days and on several in November with single males at Filey and Hornsea on 29th.

Several passage birds were recorded inland up to mid-October but most had left by the end of the first week. A few fed on berries in Roundhay Park, Leeds up to the 10th.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

One came in off the sea at Filey on 15th August (DAR).

Spurn had more records than for some years with one to two daily from 26th August to 23rd September, three on 28th August, up to five during 1st to 4th September and three to

four on 6th, 15th and 16th September and one on 12th October. One to two in Beacon Lane, Kilnsea during the first week of September (SLJ. DEM. *et al.*).

Two at Flamborough on 30th August and one on 2nd September (DIMW). One was at Kettleness on 28th September (PAL. IS). One at Scarborough Castle Hill from 19th to 24th October (CRC. *et al.*).

One was at Whitgift, near Goole on 29th August (AG).

A juvenile was trapped at Wintersett Res. on 26th August, the third inland record for the county (JSA. PS. DF. GJS). See *The Naturalist* 937, p. 76.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

One at Ben Rhydding on 27th April was the only record in that month (MVB). The next was near Ripon on 2nd May with birds at Potteric Carr, Wentworth and Spa Gill near Ripon on 3rd and Fairburn Ings and Sprotborough on 4th. The main arrival was not until the third week.

The last inland record was at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 9th September but presumed immigrants occurred on the coast in October with several on Scarborough Castle Hill from the 9th to 25th (one to four on most days). One was at Flamborough on 24th (PAL. IS) and Spurn had up to four from 10th to 18th, two on 20th and one on 22nd.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

The first was at Harthill in V.C. 63 on 16th April, the next being at Spurn on 19th, Staintondale, near Scarborough on 24th, near Harrogate on 26th and at Thrybergh Res., Wintersett Res., Tadcaster and near Ripon on 27th.

An apparent increase in the breeding population was reported by several observers but ringing figures at Knaresborough Ringing Station where the trapping effort has been the same for the last eight years did not show this, the figures for the period being (1968), 274, 12, 46, 22, 37, 28, 27 and (1975) 23.

Inland areas were clear of birds by mid-September, some late ones being at Fairburn Ings on 20th, near York on 21st and Wintersett Res. on 28th.

A few coastal areas had birds up to the end of September with two on Scarborough Castle Hill on 11th October and two on 19th, no doubt immigrants.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

One at Scalby Mills on 7th April was very early and stayed into May (RHA. AJW). One at Spurn on 19th was the next and birds were inland by the 22nd at Ripon and Harrogate and at several other places during the next few days.

The last inland birds were at Fairburn Ings on 21st September and Ripon on 24th.

Coastal passage was recorded in September and into October with singles at Spurn on 15th/17th, 21st, 23rd and 30th, at Flamborough from 12th to 16th (two on 15th) and Scarborough Castle Hill on 11th. One at Scarborough on 19th October appeared smaller than normal, was sandy brown on the upper parts and had indistinctly darker ear coverts which only showed in some angles and probably belonged to the eastern race (RHA).

Desert Warbler *Sylvia nana*

One was seen near Cliff Farm at Kilnsea on 20th October and later caught in a mist net. It remained in the area until the 24th and was the first record for Yorkshire and only the second for Britain (I. Corbett, M. Mills, B. R. Spence). It was diagnosed as belonging to the nominate race *S. n. nana* which breeds in Central Asia.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Another occurred at Frinton-on-sea, Essex on 20th and 21st November.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

After a few early records, the first of which was a bird singing at Harrogate S.F. on 1st April and one at Wheldrake next day, arrival was slow and the species was not generally distributed until the 20th when birds were everywhere in good numbers.

There was no heavy coastal passage but small numbers were seen at most watchpoints

during late August and September, maxima being at Spurn with 33 on 23rd August and 36 on 1st September.

The last inland birds were at Fulshaw in V.C. 63 and at Ben Rhydding on 28th September. Spurn had its last on 27th September.

Two birds at Bempton on 8th June were considered to belong to the Northern race *P. t. borealis* (DIMW) and may well have been so at this date and locality but the species is variable and morphological simulation must be borne in mind.

One or two occurred on Scarborough Castle Hill during the heavy fall period of 9th to 26th October (CRC).

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

One sang at Bempton at 0630 hours on 6th June and was last seen at 1100 hours (SCM. RGH).

Another, on Scarborough Castle Hill on 18th October was watched at close range (RHA).

Both accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Wintering birds were numerous. Singles were at Hornsea Mere on four dates during January and early February with two on 9th February (RGH). There were singles at Hackenthorpe, Scisset, Beaumont Park Huddersfield, Grenoside, Bradford and Rotherham in January, February and March, some individuals staying in the same area for the whole period. V. C. had singles at Settle in February/March, Ben Rhydding S.F. on 9th February and 8th to 23rd March, and Bardsey from 4th to 19th January.

There were several March records which may or may not have been the first arrivals, and some birds in early April but the main arrival into breeding areas was not until mid-April.

At the year-end, birds lingered or passed through, into October/November and several stayed to the year-end: October/November/December records came from nine inland localities in V.C.'s 63 and 64. Coastal areas had birds passing on several November dates with five at Flamborough on 14th November (PAL. IS) and three in Woodlands Ravine, Scarborough on 22nd.

Two on Scarborough Castle Hill in the fall of 18th October and one at Ravenscar on same date were very brown and showed indistinct wing-bars (RHA. CRC). They no doubt belonged to one of the eastern races.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sybillatrix*

The usual breeding records came from the wooded valleys of the west and north of the county, V.C. 61 having only five passage birds, one at Hornsea Mere on 2nd May (RGH), one at Kilnsea on 17th August (PMC) and singles at Spurn on 13th and 26th May and 18th August.

The first was at Lindley Res. on 23rd April (PJC) with birds at Swinsty and Spa Gill Wood on 27th.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

1975 was an exceptional year for this species and birds occurred from 9th October to 14th November at several coastal places. The 9th October 'fall' produced three on Scarborough Castle Hill (RHA) and four at Spurn with singles at Filey and Dane's Dyke next day. Three were at Flamborough South Landing on the 12th and three at Dane's Dyke on the 15th and one to two birds remained in these two localities until the month-end with singles at each place on 14th November (PAL. IS. DIMW. *et al.*).

Three were at Ravenscar on 12th October (RHA) and singles at Seamer Road Mere on 13th and on Castle Hill on 24th/25th (RHA. CRC). Spurn had one on 17th and two on 19th October when another was at Kilnsea.

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

Along with the spate of Yellow-browed Warblers were more Pallas's than usual.

Spurn had one on 14th October (caught) which remained until the 17th, a second bird caught on the 18th and a third on the 19th, the latter remaining until the 22nd.

One was at Dane's Dyke on 10th November (DIMW. PAL. IS) and another at Flamborough South Landing on the same day (PAL. IS).

One was at Cornelian Bay near Scarborough on 15th November (RHA).

All accepted by *British Birds* Rarities committee.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

A remarkable influx on the east coast during late September and October. At Spurn, 65 arrived on 28th September and treble figures during the period 10th to 22nd October. 810 on 11th was the maximum in one day and 1,063 were ringed during the 13 days including 308 on the 11th. Numbers dropped quickly thereafter and few remained at the end of October. On the 9th October, a day of easterly winds with fog and drizzle, hundreds arrived on Scarborough Castle Hill and RHA estimated upwards of 800 present. Birds were also numerous along the adjacent coast and in Scarborough town centre (RHA. CRC). 300 were at Flamborough on the 11th and 450 next day (PAL. IS). Hundreds were along the Ravenscar headland on 12th (RHA. CRC) and the species was numerous all along the Yorkshire coast at this time. Many thousands must have been involved.

An increase of birds at inland localities during the same period was no doubt connected and included 30 on Skipwith Common on 25th October (DRD).

30 fed on a lawn at Redmires, Sheffield on 14th December (DJG).

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

A remarkable number of records from inland localities. Singles recorded at Dale Dike Res. on 23rd February (PL), Thorne Moor on 29th March (AGMcL), Swillington on 1st April (RLB), one singing near Ripon on 10th May (DTMcA. CS), Wyming Brook, Sheffield on 30th August (PL), Dore, near Sheffield on 11th September (Mrs. PG), Blackmoorfoot

Res. on 18th October (caught and ringed) (MLD. GMY), Crookesmoor, Sheffield on 24th October (Mrs. HC), Langsett on 2nd November (DJS. JL) and Headingley on 27th November (PJMcC).

Coastal records were also numerous with singles at Hornsea on 16th and 18th March and 28th November (RGH. WFC. *et al.*), at Bempton on 23rd March, 18th to 20th April and two on 27th April (SCM), Ravenscar on 12th October (RHA) and at Spurn there was one on 7th April, two on 14th, two on 20th and two on 27th. One at Kilnsea Church on 21st October and singles at the point on 22nd October and 22nd November.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

The first and early in an otherwise late year were singles at Danefield, near Leeds on 21st April and Thrybergh Tip on 27th. It was mid-May before birds were generally distributed.

Most inland areas were clear of birds by mid-September but some late birds were recorded with one in the Museum Gardens at York on 29th September (TMC), one at Grenoside, near Sheffield on 3rd October, one at Brockadale on 5th October and in the Vicarage garden at Gouthwaite Res. on 11th October and 2nd November (PJC).

Late coastal birds were at Easington on 2nd October, Hornsea Mere on 10th and at Spurn on 7th October.

The general impression of several observers was that the species had been more numerous than of late.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Appears to be decreasing as a breeding species and several established areas reported reductions in the population. The stronghold is probably Bolton Abbey Woods where 14 singing males were counted in early May and 17 such on 18th (BB. DEM). *ca.* 20 pairs bred in Duncombe Park, Helmsley and 10 pairs at Sleightholmedale (GWF).

The first was at Millthorpe, near Sheffield on 19th April, the next near Ilkley on 26th and at a few other localities to month-end.

Coastal passage was evident but light during the autumn, maxima being 40 at Flamborough on 9th August (PAL. IS), 29 at Spurn on 17th August and 11 on 7th September. Other localities had only single figures. The last birds passed during early October, five at Flamborough on 12th and one on 15th being the last (PAL. IS).

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

Singles at Spurn on 7th, 10th and 13th October. One seen on Scarborough Castle Hill on 9th and 11th October. One at Flamborough on 11th October and two on 12th (PAL. IS).

A male in full summer plumage was watched for an hour on Skipwith Common on 27th May when it fed actively (TMC) and was seen next day (BC).

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Very numerous on Scarborough Castle Hill on 9th October with other 'fall' migrants (RHA). At Spurn on 5th October 64 birds were caught at the point (20 retraps and 44 new ones).

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

One at Spurn on 29th September. Two were in the cliff top fields at Filey on 26th and 27th October (DJB. CDRH. NAB).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Autumn passage at Spurn was spectacular: 2,677 on 21st September, 2,104 on 22nd, 4,171 on 24th, 2,049 on 26th, 6,679 on 28th and 1,751 on 4th October. Many were passing over Scarborough on 21st and inland areas had a marked passage on the same date and during September generally.

85 pairs were counted on Sutton Moor, near Keighley, an increase of 58% on 1974 (DH).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

The main arrival was during the third week of April. Late birds inland were at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 12th September and Staveley Lagoon on 27th.

A few passed on the coast during August with up to six on several days at Spurn and eight on 17th as maximum. One near Scarborough on 26th October was no doubt part of the large fall of other passerines (MF).

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus*

One in summer plumage at Hornsea Mere on 1st June (RGH). The third county record. Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Rock Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Occurred normally along the coast and up the Humber estuary as far as Blacktoft Sands.

One to two Rock Pipits occurred inland at ten places, mainly in the south of V.C. 63 and at four places in V.C. 64. All records came during January to April and October to year-end mainly during the latter period.

Correction to 1974 Report: Para. 2, line 5 should read . . . up to *18th* February (not up to 18 in February).

The passage of birds showing characters of the Scandinavian Rock Pipit *A. s. littoralis* again involved good numbers: Hornsea Mere had up to 12 daily between 18th March and 13th April (RGH. *et al.*). Two at Flamborough on 6th April (DIMW), singles at Bempton on 23rd March and 11th April and at Brough on 8th February and 22nd March (DIMW. SCM). One at Scarborough on 16th March (SML. DEM), at Scalby Mills on 10th April (SCM) and Jackson's Bay, Scarborough on 26th October (MF). Spurn had four on 28th March two on 29th and one on 17th May (DEM). Some were identified inland with one at Blacktoft Sands on 12th March (AG), one near Tadcaster on 6th April (SML) and one at Stanley S.F. (caught) on 4th December (SB).

Birds showing characters of the Water Pipit *A. s. spinoletta* were at Wintersett Res. on 6th April (PS) and 25th October (PS) and at Hornsea Mere on 27th October (CD. RH. NAB). Care should be taken to separate the Water Pipit from the Scandinavian Rock Pipit which can be a very striking bird in full spring plumage.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

The most impressive record of this species in recent years was of a roost on the girders in the roof of York railway station. 1,680 were counted on 13th March, 1,020 on 18th and 1,328 on 20th, 947 on 8th November and 875 on 23rd (JW).

A few roosts were reported in the autumn; 180 in reed mace at Elland G.P. on 22nd

October (MLD), 200 in sugar beet at West Tanfield on 20th September, 400 near Doncaster in January and 230 at Potteric Carr on 21st September as maxima.

Birds showing characters of the White Wagtail *M. a. alba* were reported from many places in spring (late March to May) and from a few in autumn when birds are difficult to separate from first-year female Pieds. Six at Esholt S.F. on 4th April and ten on 5th April (DMP) were the maxima, singles being usual.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Nested again the north-west of V.C. 61, the only pair in the vice-county (HOB. BSP).

Birds passed through on the coast during the spring and autumn, mainly the latter and Spurn had small numbers passing during September and October totalling *ca.* 40 birds. Ten flew south over Scarborough Castle Hill on 26th September (RHA. *et al.*). Elsewhere, numbers were small and often only singles during the same period.

15 were at Redmires Res. on 19th August (KC). 21 breeding sites were located in Nidderdale.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

One was at Hornsea Mere from 5th to 9th February (RGH).

First spring arrivals were at Wath Ings on 13th April, Hornsea Mere on 14th and Wintersett Res., Harrogate, Fairburn Ings and Barnoldswick on 15th. 55 were at Wath Ings on 21st April and 53 on 21st August.

36 males and 11 females were at Tophill Low Res. on 28th April (NAB). A roost at Fairburn Ings peaked at 180 on 3rd September (CW) and 150 roosted in a corn field at Wintersett Res. on 14th August. 50 roosted at Altoft Ings and Denaby Ings in early September.

Birds left most areas by mid-September but a few lingered to the month-end and some into October with one at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 4th, Fairburn Ings on 5th, Wintersett Res. on 3rd and 10th, Firth Hill G.P. on 10th and Swillington Ings on 12th.

Males showing characters of the Blue-headed Wagtail *M. f. flava* were at Filey on 22nd April, Hornsea Mere on 3rd, 5th and 13th May, Bempton on 10th, Figham on 13th, Willerby Carr on 22nd, Almholme on 1st May, Fairburn Ings on 17th May, Blacktoft Sands on 8th June and at Spurn on 19th/20th April, 9th and 19th May.

Birds showing characters of the Grey-headed Wagtail *M. f. thunbergi* were at Spurn on 18th and 19th May and 29th to 31st May and at Hornsea Mere on 17th and 18th May (RGH).

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Occurred in small numbers at many localities during January to mid-April and November to year-end.

The majority were in the early months and maxima were 80 at Bradford on 13th January (JMD) and an exceptional flock of 180 at Mickle Ings, near Otley on 1st January, 50 remaining by the 19th (ESS. *et al.*). 40 were near Huddersfield on 24th/25th January (DS).

Autumn numbers were small and 20 at Whitby and Scarborough on 29th December and 17 at Wycliffe on Tees on 18th October were the only double figures reported.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

The same pattern of occurrences as in past years with birds occurring at many places throughout the county during January to mid-April (one at Bempton on 3rd May) and mid-October to year-end.

Spurn had up to five during mid-October but all records elsewhere where of single birds.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

Another good year for records of this species: A female at Spurn on 18th May, a male on 25th, a pair on 27th/28th, two females on 30th, a male on 31st, a male on 1st June, a male on 7th, a juvenile on 11th August and one on 12th September.

A male in Primrose Valley, near Filey on 25th May, a male at Bempton on 26th to 29th May, and a pair on 8th June.

A male on Thorne Moor on 5th August (CK).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

The usual large roost flights and feeding flocks were reported during the non-breeding season. Some roosts held several thousand birds; Wentworth Woodhouse had 100,000 in late December and 50,000 at Hornsea Mere in October.

The October immigration at Spurn peaked at 6,700 on 24th. 4,000 in fields at Filey on 17th October flew south at 1800 hours and were no doubt newly arrived (DAR).

An all white bird was on Lofthouse Moor, Upper Nidderdale on 22nd June (PJC).

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*

An adult at Hutton Rudby, near Stokesley on 31st August (P. and Mrs. T. N. Gilbert). Although now in Cleveland, the record is included here as the old Yorkshire boundaries will be used for the new county avifauna which will include records up to the end of 1977.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

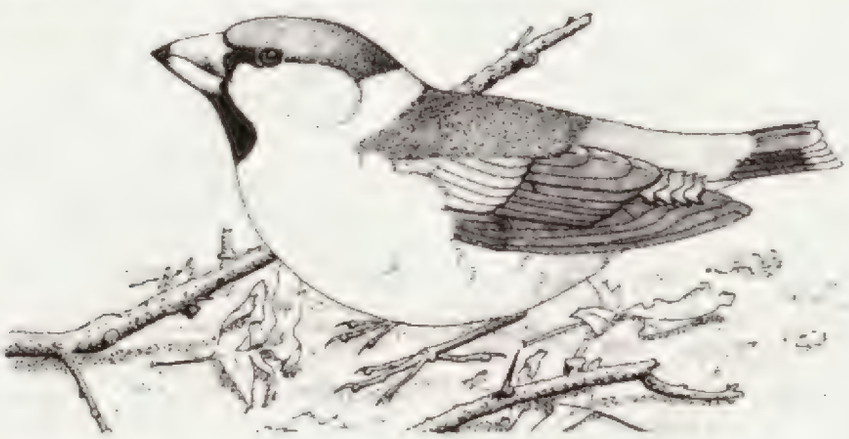
No records from V.C. 65.

V.C. 61: Singles at Flamborough on 30th August and 2nd September (DIMW). Singles at Spurn on 25th May and 26th October.

V.C. 62: A pair at Thorne Park near Scarborough on 8th May (MF) and one at Sleightholmedale on 5th July (GWF).

V.C. 63: A few in the early months feeding on beech mast and cherry stones at Woolley Hall (JED. DL). One at Loxley Hall on 5th March, one at Thrybergh Tip on 2nd February and one at Aston Ponds on 3rd May. Up to four at Roche Abbey in November.

V.C. 64: Bred near Ripon and fledged two young (DTMcA. CS). Present at Studley Park during the year with maximum of six in February. Eight near Leeds in April (GTh). Two at Copgrove on 20th April, two at Knaresborough on 22nd December and singles at Farnham G.P. on 13th April, Ribston in July and Knaresborough Ringing Station on 17th May and 10th October and near Ilkley in March and April.



Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

700 were at Wintersett Res. from January to mid-March. Autumn flocks of up to 200 occurred at several places and 300 were at Knaresborough Ringing Station during August and September, Leighton Res. in December, Wentworth Woodhouse in October with 500 on 4th November, and 1,000 at Thrybergh Wood on 26th October.

Many passed south at Spurn during late September/October and early November.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

190 were at a roost in Hull on 29th February. 57 roosted in Avenue Road, Doncaster on 3rd March. 300 at Potteric Carr in June was an exceptional flock for this time of year.

Autumn flocks were numerous and some were large: parties of 20 to 30 were common in

all parts of the county during September, larger flocks being 80 near Ripon on 2nd, 85 on Greenhow Hill, near Pateley Bridge on 13th, 60 in Bretton Park on 14th, 60 near Huddersfield on 23rd, 100 at Filey on 6th (with 104 on 4th October), 220 at Welton Water on 25th, 60 at Almholme on 28th and at Hatfield Moor in October and Blaxton in December. 50 were on the south cliffs at Bridlington in October.

Birds passed south at Spurn in spring and autumn with maxima of 50 on 29th April and 70 on 30th, 396 on 10th May and in autumn, 289 on 26th September and 929 on 4th October.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Numbers were much better than 1974 and there were many flocks of up to 50 birds. 100 at Grimesgill, near Ripon on 20th January, 120 at Cookridge, Leeds on 16th February and 70 at Lindley Res. on 19th January were maxima in the early months.

Very numerous from October with 165 at Lindley Res. on 30th October, 200 near Harrogate on 12th December and 350 at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 9th November. Smaller numbers were everywhere.

One flew south at Bempton on 30th June (SCM).

Present at two breeding sites in V.C. 63. I received no details of breeding in the north-east.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Very common, especially in the autumn when many places had flocks of up to 400 birds. 500 roosted at Wintersett Res. on 6th August. Several large flocks wintered in the county.

Passage at Spurn involved the expected high numbers with 1,000 on 18th April, 1,141 on 28th September and 1,962 on 4th October as maxima.

Twite *Acanthis flavirostris*

The moorland flocks in V.C.'s 63 and 64 were again large; 100 at Blackstone Edge on 3rd September, 200 at Ringstone Edge in mid-August, 100 at Rishworth on 2nd September, 100 on Malham Moor on 23rd August and 200 on Greenhow Hill, near Pateley Bridge on 23rd August after a steady build-up during July to 70 on the 20th and 90 on 26th. Smaller parties were common at other moorland localities.

18 pairs bred on Sutton Moor, near Kelghley (14 pairs in 1974) (DH).

Birds in the lowlands and on the coast were not scarce and several places had small numbers. 30 were at Flamborough on 10th October and 20 flew along the cliffs at Bempton on 1st November. 20 were at Ravenscar on 12th October and 45 on 13th.

Southerly passage at Spurn was impressive during October with 95 on 1st, 102 on 2nd, 47 on 3rd, 161 on 4th, 182 on 5th, 144 on 6th, 62 on 8th, 20 on 14th and five on 30th.

The sight of a Twite at any height need not excite!

Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*

200 at Grimesgill, near Ripon on 4th March, 100 near Sheffield on 15th March, 200 at Leighton Res. on 23rd February and 29th March and 300 in Lindley Wood on 10th April were inland maxima during the early months. Spurn had 150 on 10th May and 120 on 11th. A Mealy was caught at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 2nd March (RE. JRM) and one was at Newmillerdam on 2nd January (GC).

The autumn produced the most spectacular Redpoll influx of recent years and birds were everywhere including many Mealies (see below). Some flocks were unprecedented, the largest being 1,000 in Selby Forest on 26th October (80 netted in ten minutes) (PR).

Flocks of up to 100 birds were common in many areas, there were several flocks of up to 200 and a few up to 300. October was the main month of arrival and birds were present to the year-end. 300 were ringed at Melton Wood during July/August.

What was perhaps more impressive was the large numbers of Mealy Redpolls, some being very pale indeed and doubtless originating from the distant end of the population. One such at Ravenscar on 12th October had snowy white underparts and a very white rump (RHA). A flock of 30 feeding on *poinsettia* in a Selby garden on 9th November consisted of birds much paler than *normal* Mealies (PR). Two were near Settle on 17th October (BSh), one was at

Lindley Res. on 28th December (PJC), one was caught at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 8th November, and five were watched there on 14th December (RE. JRM). A flock of 70 at Plompton, near Knaresborough on 27th December were much paler than several other flocks of *cabaret* seen that day (PVI). One was at Coxley Valley in V.C. 63 on 10th December (DP) and there was a small passage of this race at Blacktoft Sands during 21st to 29th October with 10 on 27th as maximum (AG). Singles were near Scarborough on 10th and 19th October (RHA. CRC).

Spurn had several during the period with 40 on 18th October as maximum but smaller numbers on several dates in November and on two in December. Flamborough had four on 11th October, six on 12th, five on 23rd and singles on a few other dates within this period (HOB. PAL. AFGW. *et al.*). One at Filey on 18th October (RHA), four at Figham on 21st (DEM), ten at Tunstall on 23rd (DIMW), two at Skeffling and one at Holmpton on 9th November (DIMW) and two at Hornsea Mere on 15th November (RGH).

Most birds accompanied parties of *cabaret* and comparison was thus possible although in most cases such was not necessary, so pale were they.

Arctic Redpoll *Acanthis hornemanni*

It is difficult to be certain of the origin of redpolls and perhaps geographical range is simply what the family is really all about. However, we can be sure that the Mealy Redpolls listed above originated in northern Europe and we can surely consider the ones listed under this *species* to originate from the area where the characters shown are known to be the norm whether we accept it as a species or simply as a race of *flammea* from the purest end of the cline. Why wasn't the bird at Ravenscar on 12th October (see under Redpoll) claimed as an Arctic we may ask. Why not indeed?

One was caught at Spurn on 12th October and after some deliberation was assigned to this species (JC. *et al.*). Two came in off the sea at Flamborough on 11th October and were put down as *hornemanni* (PAL. IS. AFGW. *et al.*) as was one at Spurn on 21st October (DIMW).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

A pair was amongst juniper on Moughton Fell above Settle on 5th July (BSh).

A bird at Flamborough on 16th October was large and brightly coloured and was considered to belong to the northern race *P. p. pyrrhula* (PAL. IS). This bird's arrival was obviously connected with the influx of northern redpolls and two Parrot Crossbills (see below).

Scarlet Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

One near Kilnsea Church on 18th and 19th October (CDRH).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Very few recorded: V.C. 61; one at Dane's Dyke on 26th May (PBe). Six at Hornsea on 25th July (RGH). Two at Kilnsea on 16th August and one at Hornsea on 22nd September (RGH). V.C. 62; six at Hutton-le-Hole on 23rd August. V.C. 63; 11 at Langsett on 26th June and seven on 28th (CRMcK. IF), one at Midhope on 5th July and 27th October (DM. CRMcK), three at Wyming Brook on 8th January (DH) and four on 14th December (DJG). One at Strines on 28th December (DS). V.C. 64; four at Harewood on 27th April, singles at Fairburn Ings on 25th August, Ilkley on 27th and Knaresborough Ringing Station on 28th. Three at Settle on 5th September and four on 14th December (BSh). One at Lindley Res. on 11th September (PJC) and four at Eccup Res. on 19th October (PS).

Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pityopsittacus*

A male was at Spurn on 22nd October and watched perched and in flight. A female was found stunned near a greenhouse at Tophill Low Res. on 23rd October and died later. The corpse was examined by P. W. Izzard and D. E. Murray and exhibited at a meeting of

Beverley Naturalists before being sent to J.R.M. for confirmation. It was indeed this species, an adult, and is in the J.R.M. collection, number A.61.1.

The third and fourth county records.

Figure 5. Parrot Crossbill *Loxia pityopsittacus*, Tophill Low Reservoir, 23rd October 1975. The bird was found injured and died later. The fourth Yorkshire record. Drawn from the study skin by R. G. Hawley.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

More flocks reported than of late with 540 at Bradfield in V.C. 63 on 26th January (DB), 150 at Crosscliffe on 20th January (MF), 90 at Woodvale in V.C. 62 on 22nd February and up to 200 roosting at Creskeld, near Leeds in January/February and 100 during November/December. 100 were at Skelding Lane, near Pateley Bridge on 10th January and 150 were at Agden Res. on 19th January (JED).

75 were at Eccup Res. on 2nd April.

100 were at Fewston Res. on 9th October (GTF), 170 were in Thorne Park, near Scarborough on 13th January (MF). 150 went to roost at Redmires on 24th November (KC) and 70 were at Plompton, near Knaresborough on 27th December.

ca. 1,000 were at Langdale on 30th November (RHA).

Spurn had passage in March to May and September to November with 65 on 8th March and 180 on 8th April. 65 on 18th October was maximum in autumn.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

V.C. 63 again held the largest flocks during the early months: up to 500 were in Bretton Park during January (no more than 12 in February) (DP. *et al.*). 150 roosting at Deffer Wood on 1st January (NL), 100 at Broomhead on 26th January (DB), 100 at Agden on 2nd February and 16th March (JED) and 70 at Moss Valley on 12th April (DJG). 400 to 500 were

in Royds Hall Wood, Bradford in mid-January and 300 on 23rd (ADW). 200 at Potteric Carr on 2nd March. 100 at a roost at Ogden Res. on 21st April (DC). V.C. 64 had much smaller flocks with maximum of 100 at Harrogate on 13th January (JEA).

A few birds lingered into May with a female at Hornsea on 18th (RGH) and single birds at Spurn on 25th and 27th.

First of autumn was at Spurn on 29th September, the next being on 5th October. Inland flocks were 100 at a roost at Ogden Res. during October/November (DC), 100 at Melton Wood on 22nd October, 100 at Wentworth on 26th October (JIM), 200 in Selby Forest on 26th October (PR), 100 at Langsett on 27th October (CRMcK), 100 at Dob Park in the Washburn Valley on 16th December (GTF) and 500 at Bishop Thornton on 20th December (ADW).

Spurn had a massive arrival on 18th October when 250 were at the Warren and 2,000 passed south over the point.

Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*

The Wath Ings roost held up to 125 in January/February, 300 on 17th March, 800 on 2nd April and 300 on 22nd November (JH). A roost at Fairburn Ings in December peaked at 200 on 14th (CW. *et al.*).

Flocks of up to 50 occurred in some coastal areas of V.C. 61 during the winter months. 65 were at Spurn on 28th and 30th October. 80 at Hornsea Mere in November was maximum at the winter roost. 60 were at Newby, near Scarborough on 19th January (MF).

240 fed with yellowhammers on stubble near Tadcaster on 14th December and increased to 300 by 24th (SML).

Smaller numbers occurred at other inland and coastal areas during the autumn and winter months.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

550 feeding on sown grass seed at Brotherton Ings on 13th December and 670 on 18th was by far the county's largest assembly (SML. CW. *et al.*).

400 were at Wintersett Res. during January to mid-March. 200 on Hatfield Moor on 18th January, 150 on 16th February and 100 on 8th March with 50 in November. 370 at Shire Oaks, near Tadcaster on 14th December (SML). 150 at Bradfield on 26th January (DB) and 120 at a roost on Galloos Hill, Knaresborough on 27th December (PVI) were the only other flocks in excess of 80. Smaller flocks occurred at many places throughout the county.

Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola*

A male at Spurn on 14th and 15th June was watched at close range and was the first record for Yorkshire (JC. C. and Mrs. JM).

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

One at Spurn on 29th May, two on 7th September and one on 19th October.

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica*

One at Redcar on 9th and 10th May (MAB. CDRH. *et al.*). Although Redcar is now in Cleveland, this record is published here for the reasons stated elsewhere in the classified list.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Wath Ings had a roost of 125 on 1st January and 200 on 1st October. 100 at Wintersett Res. on 7th October and 150 on Thorne Moor on 12th October (ML). 500 roosted at Blacktoft Sands on 2nd January and there were 1,000 there on 28th October and 750 on 22nd December. *ca.* 140 pairs bred on the reserve (AG).

Spurn had 180 on 28th September and 113 on 6th October as maxima of a southward passage during late September and early October and large numbers were at Filey on 25th October (RHA). 70 at Spurn on 22nd November.

Swillington Ings had 20 in April and 50 in May (JW). 40 were at Strensall in December

(JWh). 150 fed on sown grass seed at Brotherton Ings on 13th December (SML). 70 at Hutton Cranswick in V.C. 61 on 18th January (SML).

Extending its range as a breeding species in several areas in the south.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

There were a few records in the early months: singles at Atwick on 18th January, Barmston on 25th January and Hornsea Mere on 6th February (WFC. RGH). 17 at Fraisthorpe on 18th February and 10 on 3rd March (CDRH. DEM).

A male was at Spurn from 31st May to 3rd June.

Two at Spurn from 18th September and up to three on several dates to year-end. Two at Filey on 27th September and on a few dates to 25th October when 20 were present. 20 still there on 27th, 24 on 28th and 30 on 1st November (RHA. DEM. DJB. *et al.*). Up to six remained to year-end.

Five were at Fraisthorpe on 22nd December and 10 on 29th (SML. DIMW). One to four occurred at a few other coastal areas in V.C. 61 during the same period.

One at Blacktoft Sands on 18th October (AG).

One near Kexby, 10 kms. east of York on 19th October (TMC).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

An exceptionally good year with numbers such as occurred in the 1950's.

Spurn had birds up to mid-April with maxima of 150 on 3rd January, 150 on 26th January, 150 on 5th February, 200 to 300 during 8th to 11th February, 100 on 29th February, 200 on 2nd March and 110 on 22nd March with smaller numbers in early April to the last on 27th. 45 were at Filey on 18th January (RHA), 39 at Atwick Gap on same date and 86 on 2nd March (WFC). 42 were at Mappleton on 14th January and 44 on 11th February (WFC).

The first autumn bird was at Kettleness on 7th September (PAL). Autumn numbers were lower than during the early months and maxima were 35 at Filey on 2nd November and 34 on 20th December (RHA), 45 at Flamborough on 10th November (DIMW), 53 at Spurn on 9th November, and 86 on 14th December. Smaller numbers occurred at many other coastal areas.

Small parties occurred inland on several moorland sites in the west during the winter months, eight in the south-west in mid-February and six at Cupwith Hill, west of Huddersfield on 22nd November being the maxima (JED).

One at Wath Ings on 15th March (JMT), 12 at Fairburn Ings on 3rd January and singles on three December dates were the only inland birds from lowland sites apart from Blacktoft Sands where singles occurred on four dates.

Rufous-sided Towhee *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*

A male was caught at Spurn on 5th September and it remained in the buckthorn area near the Warren Cottage until the year-end. It was re-trapped on two occasions and was watched by hundreds of people during its stay. It belonged to one of the western races, distinguished by having white spots on the scapulars and was in active moult when first caught. Its origin can only be conjectured but the racial characters it exhibited exist in the populations as far north as western Canada, so natural vagrancy is not impossible, though perhaps unlikely in this case.

A new species for the county list.

Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Some large flocks occurred. 800 at Wintersett Res. on 4th January being exceptional. 400 were there on 28th December. Other maxima were 200 at Wath on 8th February, 200 at Fairburn Ings during the early autumn, 200 at Kirkheaton, near Huddersfield on 2nd November, 150 at Staveley Lagoon on 5th March and 120 at Flamborough on 8th March. 120 at Cottingham on 2nd May was a late date for such a flock (SML).

500 flew south at Spurn on 4th and 24th October.

ca. 30 pairs nested in the cliff faces at Bempton (SCM).

The following species also occurred in the county during 1975:

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*, Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*, Great Tit *Parus major*, House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*.

Escaped birds

Several species of birds, which have obviously escaped from captivity, are seen each year. These are often behaving in an apparently normal and 'wild' manner and in the case of some waterfowl, it is impossible to know for certain where they originated. Most of this latter group appear in the classified list with the escape proviso. In addition to the larger species published below, there were records of small cage birds from several places. Spurn had a series of Oriental passerines during August and early September, suggesting escape from a shipment into Hull. Included were Black-headed Weaver, Manakin *sp.*, Lavender Finch and Red Bishop.

Bahama Pintail *Anas bahamensis*

Four were at Fairburn Ings on 14th September and one on the 27th (CW *et al.*). One flew into Healaugh Pond, near Tadcaster on 14th September (SML).

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

One flew north at Long Nab, Burniston on 3rd September (MF. FW). One was at Spurn on 10th May, three on 18th May and one on 22nd September. All were on the Humber mud and were of the race *chilensis*.

Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus*

A male at Wyming Brook, Sheffield on 9th May and 28th July.

Sarus Crane *Grus antigone*

Single sightings near Easingwold on 20th August (TMC. MC), at Staveley Lagoon from 6th to 8th September (RE *et al.*), near Ripon from 8th September to 7th October (CS. DTMcA) probably involved the same bird.

Demoiselle Crane *Anthropoides virgo*

One at Nosterfield G.P. in the evening of 31st May was watched down to 350 metres for half an hour. The bird was very alert and constantly looked up nervously whilst feeding (CS. CJC).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Two flew south at Spurn on 8th March, one was on the peninsula on 16th April and one flew south on 14th June. One flew high to the north over Knaresborough Ringing Station on 16th September and what was presumably the same bird was seen flying over Copgrove, some eight kilometres north of Knaresborough, 10 minutes later (JRM. RE). One fed on apples in a Knaresborough garden on several December days (FS).

A SUMMARY OF THE OCTOBER FALL OF PASSERINES

R. H. APPLEBY & D. E. MURRAY

Spectacular numbers of drift migrants arrived on the Yorkshire coast during early October 1975. A high pressure weather system over Asia and Eastern Europe moved westwards over the British Isles during July and August and was no doubt responsible for the many eastern species which occurred. After a few isolated occurrences such as an Icterine Warbler in full song near Scarborough in mid-July and a White Pelican on the Humber on 16th July both of which may have been associated with the general weather situation, the first real indication of an arrival of birds from the east was on 30th August when with rain and a force five wind from the north-east, a small fall of passerines included a Blyth's Reed Warbler at Filey, and next day Spurn had a Wryneck and four Barred Warblers and Bempton had a Lesser Golden Plover of the Asiatic race. The normal scattering of migrants occurred along the coast during most of September with an influx of pale, brightly coloured Blue Tits along most of the coast on the 21st. Goldcrests began to arrive from the 27th and a few Blackbirds were present on the 28th.

Winter visitors began to arrive in early October with a Lapland Bunting at Spurn on the 2nd and one at Spurn on the 4th with two Snow Buntings. On the 6th, the wind verred north-west to north at force four and continued up to the 9th when it shifted into the east and brought light drizzle and coastal fog in some parts. These conditions were perfect for a fall of passerines and thousands of thrushes arrived between Ravenscar and Spurn. At Scarborough, Filey and Spurn, thousands of Fieldfares and Redwings with smaller numbers of Blackbirds and Ring Ousels came in. Bramblings were also involved and the movement continued throughout the day and into the night.

At mid-day on the 9th, Scarborough Castle Hill was alive with Goldcrests and Blue Tits, Dunnocks and Robins were also much in evidence. There were also several Garden Warblers and *phylloscopus* warblers including several Yellow-browed, with four at Spurn and three at Scarborough. A Red-breasted Flycatcher was also at Scarborough and a Shorelark flew in. Short-eared Owls were associated with this movement and three were at Spurn with a Woodcock and a Jack Snipe.

The same general weather conditions prevailed during most of October and birds continued to arrive. Flamborough Head had 300 Goldcrests, a Red-breasted Flycatcher, four Mealy Redpolls and two Arctic Redpolls on the 11th and five Great Grey Shrikes were at Spurn and one at Skeffling. 1,000 Goldcrests and three Great Spotted Woodpeckers were at Spurn on the same date. A Firecrest was at Ravenscar on the 12th, four Yellow-browed Warblers, four Lapland Buntings and 450 Goldcrests were at Flamborough and Spurn had many Blackbirds and Redwings and an increase in Stonechats to 15 with the first Long-eared Owl and an Arctic Redpoll. Two Bluethroats and a Red-breasted Flycatcher were at Spurn on the 13th and 500 Goldcrests were still on the peninsula. Thrushes continued to arrive during the next few days and 1,000 Skylarks flew south at Spurn on the 14th on which date a Pallas's Warbler was seen. The 15th and 16th were comparatively quiet but there were four Yellow-browed Warblers and a Mealy Redpoll at Flamborough and five Great Grey Shrikes at Spurn where Skylarks were still moving. An influx of thrushes occurred on the 17th and Starling and Lapwings were coming in over the sea. This influx strengthened on the 18th and Spurn had 2,000 Redwings moving south and a further 2,000 down on the peninsula, 1,000 Blackbirds flying over and 600 grounded and 100 Song Thrushes. There were also 42 Mealy Redpolls, 250 Bramblings moving south and another 2,000 in the area, a Pallas's Warbler and a Scarlet Rosefinch.

Further north at Ravenscar there was a very brown eastern Chiffchaff showing a faint wing bar and Scarborough Castle Hill had many new arrivals including two eastern Chiffchaffs and a Greenish Warbler. A Barred Warbler and a Siberian Lesser Whitethroat were at Scarborough on the 19th and 200 Robins arrived at Spurn with three Yellow-browed Warblers, an Ortolan Bunting and a Scarlet Rosefinch. Long-eared Owls were also in evidence during this period. A Desert Warbler was at Spurn on the 20th and thrushes continued to arrive in small numbers. On the 21st there were four Great Grey Shrikes and a

Firecrest on the peninsula and single Great Grey Shrikes at Kilnsea and Filey and a Barred Warbler at Scarborough. Thrushes increased again on the 22nd when 1,000 Fieldfares, 1,000 Redwings and 500 Blackbirds came in at Spurn and 50 Robins, a Firecrest and a Parrot Crossbill were on the peninsula. A second Parrot Crossbill was found injured at Tophill Low Reservoir on the 23rd and there was a sprinkling of Lapland Buntings and Mealy Redpolls along the coast during this period. An Arctic Redpoll was at Spurn on the 24th and a few Blackcaps, Chiffchaffs and two Great Spotted Woodpeckers were present. The Desert Warbler was seen for the last time on the 24th. By the 25th, most birds had moved on and only small numbers of typical winter visitors such as Snow Buntings, Lapland Buntings, Long and Short-eared Owls were present thereafter. A Northern Bullfinch was at Spurn on the 29th when 24 Lapland Buntings were at Filey. A final push of thrushes came on 1st November and Spurn had 100 Fieldfares, 150 Redwings and smaller numbers of Blackbirds together with 1,225 Starlings. Stragglers from the east were still turning up in November and Spurn had a Rufous Turtle Dove and a very pale Redpoll on the 8th and there were two Pallas's Warblers at Flamborough on the 10th and one at Scarborough on the 15th. A Bluethroat at Spurn on the 15th and 16th was late and a Black Redstart was present on the 16th. The wind strengthened to gale force 9 on the 16th creating mountainous seas. This gale continued throughout the night, stripping the last remnants of leaves from the trees and marked the end of a memorable autumn.

We would like to thank John R. Mather for much advice and assistance in the compilation of this summary. Scientific names of species mentioned can be found in the classified list.

Gulls at Scarborough during 1975

with special reference to plumage of Glaucous, Iceland, and Mediterranean gulls

R. H. Appleby

Introduction

It is a fact that the Scarborough area, Scalby Mills in particular, became the Yorkshire mecca for gull watchers during 1975, with the occurrence of so many Glaucous, Iceland and Mediterranean Gulls attracting people from a wide area. A total of ten gull species was recorded there, some in unprecedented numbers, and a summary follows.

Summary of Species

Great Black-backed Gull

Present during most of the year with large concentrations at Scalby Mills during November and December of between 800–1,000. An "aberrant bird", no doubt the individual featured in the Y.N.U. Ornithological Report for 1974, frequented the Scalby Mills area from the 7th April — 6th December.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Considered by some as being rarer than Glaucous in the Scarborough district, the species occurred at several localities with up to three adults at Scalby Mills during March, one to two adults and a second-year bird during April, one to two adults and a first-year bird during May, June and July and a second-year bird in June. One to two adults during August and one on 14th October.

Herring Gull

Ever present with large assemblies at Cornelian, Scarborough South Bay, Scalby Mills and Jackson's Bay involving thousands of birds during January — March. One showing the characters of the Scandinavian race at the harbour on the 11th January (GTF). A winter build-up of similar proportion at the same localities occurred during November and December.

Common Gull

Large numbers assembled at Scalby Mills in the evenings of late March early April. For example, on the 23rd March, 7,000 were present and thousands assembled at the Scalby beck estuary during the evening of 12th April. After their fresh water ablutions, there was a concerted dispersal to form small rafts on the sea in the North Bay numbering well over 8,000 — quite a sight added to the many other gulls present on the same date.

Glaucous Gull

Comparatively large numbers of both Glaucous and Iceland Gulls occurred in the Scarborough area during the early months of the year. It is now apparent that the 18th January was without doubt the day for northern gulls when there were at least five individual Glaucous in the area (see also Iceland). At Scalby Mills there were two (first-winter (a) and second-winter (b)) at Scarborough harbour one (first winter (c)) Cornelian Bay two (adult (d) and first-winter (e)), both at the sewer outfall. At Scarborough harbour on the 23rd January an adult was present (d). On the 24th there were two (first-winter (a) and second-winter (b)), two first-winter birds (a) (c) on the 25th on which date one considered to be in its fourth-year (f) was at Cornelian Bay. This latter was virtually in adult plumage except that the greater wing coverts had brownish tips and the bill was yellowish with a reddish brown band at the tip. This bird was seen thereafter on many dates until the 22nd March. A first-winter bird (g) was seen at Cornelian on the 17th February, Scalby Mills on the 19th and Scarborough harbour on the 23rd. At Scalby Mills on the 1st March there were three (two first-winter, one fourth-year (h)) the latter, see (f) above, was a much larger and bulkier bird having more of the greater coverts tipped brownish, also some of the lesser coverts. On the 2nd March at Scarborough harbour a fifth individual first-winter bird (i) was present. At Scalby Mills the

following day three first-winter birds stood together on the outer rocks — a favourite resting place — where a fourth-year and a second-year stood on the 14th/15th respectively. There were three (two first-winter, one fourth-year) at Cornelian on the 22nd. A second-year bird was at Scalby Mills on the 23rd March.

To sum up, there were at least five first-year birds, one second-year, two fourth-year and one adult present during the period January to March.

An adult and three first-year birds frequented the same areas during April.

On the 9th November a first-winter bird (j) was in the Scarborough harbour and was subsequently seen many times in the area until the end of the year.

Iceland Gull

A second-winter Iceland gull (a) in Scarborough harbour on the 1st January was the same individual that had been frequenting the area during the latter part of 1974; a missing or twisted primary in the left wing made it immediately recognisable. The bird was generally bright off-white in colour with buff brown fleckings on the crown, and a slight concentration of these around dark eyes, tending to make them appear larger. The nape, neck, throat and underparts were buffish white, the primaries were creamy white contrasting with rest of the wing and extended beyond the tail approximately 50 mm. Rest of the plumage, including wings, was buffish off-white with *indistinct* wavy barrings and buff tips to all feathers. The mantle was a mixture of buff white and some grey at the base of the neck. The bill pattern was almost typical; slightly more than the distal third and more on one side than the other was tipped blackish and it had a pinkish culmen.

This bird was joined by a second biscuit coloured first-winter bird (b) on the 8th January.

On 18th January there was a second-winter bird (a) in the harbour area, a first-winter bird (b) and a second-winter bird (c) at Scalby Mills. All three were together at Scalby Mills the following day and were seen individually throughout February and March.

Iceland Gull (c) was virtually identical to (a) except that both wings had complete primaries and it also had pale eyes. A third second-winter bird (d) was seen at Cornelian Bay on the 22nd February and was later seen at Scalby Mills on the 3rd March. This had an almost white head with brownish flecks on the crown and around the eyes, buffish neck and breast, patchy grey mantle with some buff-white, whitish primaries extended at least 50 mm beyond the tail, pale pinkish-grey bill with distal third tipped blackish, pale eyes and indistinct brownish wavy barrings and tips to rest of feathers.

A first-winter and a second-winter bird were frequenty seen both at Cornelian Bay and the harbour during the month of March.

On the 13th April the second-winter bird in the harbour was moulting and looking rather patchy assuming its second-summer plumage. The primaries and wing coverts were appearing very white and the patchy grey mantle was quite grey at the base of the neck. This bird was at Scalby Mills on the 10th May and was fully moulted into second-summer plumage.

To sum up there were three second-year birds and one first-year at Scarborough between January and May. On the 14th November a first-winter bird (e) was in the harbour and stayed in the area until the end of the year. On the 1st December a second-winter bird (f) was present, also staying until the end of the year.

Mediterranean Gull

An unprecedented number occurred at Scalby Mills and it was possible to see one there in any month from February until the end of the year. Just where all the Mediterranean Gulls came from with the predominantly northerly airstreams during the latter part of 1974 and early 1975 is still something of a puzzle. I would suggest that the almost continual easterly high pressure systems that occurred during the summer was the reason why so many stayed in the district and possibly for the added number in late September.

The first to occur was on the 15th February at Scalby Mills. A second-winter bird (or sub-adult) (a) having an orange bill with a black tip, black outer web to black tipped second

Figure 6. Mediterranean Gulls *Larus melanocephalus*. Scarborough, February to March 1975. A. first-winter; B. second-winter; C. D. and E. head patterns of three different first-winter birds. Drawn by R. H. Appleby (not to scale).

primary, faint bleached brownish band at tip of third primary, fourth and fifth primaries banded the same brownish black, the rest as second-winter.

On the 17th February a bird in first-winter plumage (b) was seen bathing and preening in the rock pools at the estuary of Scalby Beck from 11.20 hrs. to 13.30 hrs. This had a creamy white head, dark blackish spots in front of the eyes, around and graduating out from behind and upwards to centre of the crown. The crown and forehead flecked and streaked brownish. The eye appeared dark with white eyelids and the bill was all dark. Throat and underparts were creamy white with faint flecking on the flanks. Mantle, secondaries and forwing silver grey. There was a narrow brownish band on the leading edge of wings formed by brownish tips to some of those feathers. Dark or brownish black tips to wing coverts and primary coverts from base of wing to carpal. The first four or five primaries were blackish, the rest white with blocks of brownish black at tips. The secondaries had blackish tips forming a band. The few inner primaries that were mainly white stood out as a pale triangular panel contrasting sharply with the rest of the wing and appearing almost translucent. This was also very noticeable from the underside of the wings when in flight. From the underside, the secondaries were not as pale, but the blackish band as described was noticeable (see photo). Rump and tail whitish-cream with narrow sub-terminal blackish band. The legs and feet appeared dark.

Although the wing pattern is similar to Common Gull in this plumage, it is of a completely different visual texture. There is less grading together than in Common Gull and the areas of colour are more separate. The general effect therefore is of a contrasting plumage, generally paler than Common Gull.

It is most important to draw attention to the fact that at a distance the first-year plumage of a Mediterranean Gull is, in extreme cases, very reminiscent of a Sabines Gull and confusion may occur.

An adult in winter plumage (c) was present in the evening of the 8th March. On the 29th March at Jackson's Bay, a few hundred yards north of Scalby Mills, a bird in first-winter plumage (d) was seen feeding and hovering with the hundreds of other gulls present at the sewer outlet (see plate 1). At first it was thought to be the same bird as on the 17th February (b). It was soon apparent however that it was not. Furthermore, during the time that followed, at least three individual first-winter birds were observed, each identified on head plumage pattern, bill pattern, and variation in wing colour and markings. They were all quite different from (b), being considerably paler, particularly on wing pattern and with much whiter inner primaries.

It was possible to follow the bird (d) hovering to and fro through the pack, the slightly lighter wing beats being subtly different from Common Gulls in this situation. A shorter wing span than Common Gull, and broader head and wings than Black-headed Gull were also noticable. When picking food from the surface in flight it would furiously paddle its dark legs and feet. The first four or five primaries were dark blackish brown, the remainder and the secondaries were a dirty greyish white with blackish brown tips to the secondaries forming a very obvious blackish band. This band was broken on the right wing by one or two white feathers. All the wing coverts were sandy brown and rich brown, contrasting sharply with the primaries and there were pale greyish white panels on the inner primaries and secondaries. The underparts were white, as was the head, except for dark spots smudging the eye, graduating out from behind and curving upwards, fading out to an indistinct line of spots. The bill was a dark blackish-red with a black tip, appearing all dark at a distance.

Whilst observing (d) another individual (e) appeared on the scene and both were frequently seen hovering together over the same sewer outlet. The wing pattern was similar to (d), but was much darker flat brown on the wing coverts and forewing, and both wings had unbroken bands on the secondaries. The spots around the eyes formed a straight thick line with a lower spot almost separate from the main smudge. The bill was almost three quarters black with an orange red base. The feet, seen when paddling, were noticeably paler.

On the 30th March at 16.00 hrs. both (d) and (e) were again present at Jackson's Bay, standing on rocks, with yet another first-winter bird (f) feeding at the sewer outlet. This had virtually the same wing pattern as (e). The spots around the eyes formed an obvious thick

dark line, widening as it graduated out from behind and having a noticeable upward curve and slight flecking on the crown. The bill was half black with a dirty yellowish brown base.

During April (d), (e) and (f) were frequently seen in the district and were commencing moult into first-summer plumage. At the harbour wall sewer outlet on the 2nd April a moulting first-year bird was present. An adult in summer plumage at Scalby Mills — Jackson's Bay from the 6th–10th April was a superb bird, and most obliging to the many photographers frequenting the area.

It was difficult to determine whether or not this was another individual. In order to give the exact number of Mediterranean Gulls frequenting the area I will assume that this was bird (c). For the same reason, a second summer bird at the same place from the 10th–17th May was presumably (a).

During a sea watch from the Marine Drive on the 24th May a first-summer bird flew north to Scalby Mills and was present there until the 31st July, on which date an adult was seen which stayed until the 20th September.

Without doubt the most interesting bird was a juvenile (g) seen from the harbour sea wall on the 17th August and at Scalby Mills the following day (CRC). It was first seen feeding in the company of a mixed flock of gulls at the harbour sewer outlet area. The first noticeable plumage details were seen on the wings. These had very dark brown forwings contrasting sharply with pale grey secondaries which were tipped blackish, forming distinct bands. this feature was again very noticeable on the underside of the wings as on the first-winter birds seen earlier. The narrow black tail band was also sharply defined. The drooped bill was dark in colour, the head pale buff-white with rather indistinct darkish eye smudges. There was dark grey-brown flecking on the back of the head and similar mottling on shoulders and flanks. The breast and neck were paler. The wing coverts and mantle feathers formed an arrow-head pattern with dark brown centres edged pale grey. The legs were dark greyish-plum colour, seen when standing in the characteristic hunched position.

An adult (h) at the harbour sewer outlet on the 20th September was virtually in winter plumage and had an interesting bill pattern of red, yellow and black. The upper mandible was divided into four almost equal parts; the tip red, the next portion blackish, followed by a yellowish colour and the base black. The lower mandible was in three parts; the tip red in line with the upper mandible, a blackish centre area and the base was a yellowish colour.

On the same date at Scalby Mills, in the late afternoon, two adults (i) (j) were seen swimming side by side, both with different bill patterns to the harbour bird.

The following birds were seen at Scalby Mills; 28th September, one second-winter; 3rd October, one adult in winter plumage; 12th October, two adults; 16th to 18th October, one adult; 25th October, one second-winter and one adult; 1st November, one first-winter (possibly (g)) showing noticeable square end to eye smudges; 6th December, an adult; 13th December, two first-winter (k) and (l), both had very noticeable upward curves of the eye smudges. To sum up, there were at least six first-winter, one second-winter, four adults and one juvenile bird seen in the immediate Scarborough area.

Little Gull

This once rare visitor is now annual at Scarborough. An adult in winter plumage at Scalby Mills during March and April was assuming summer plumage on the 13th April. An adult, still in winter plumage, was present on the 15th April and stayed to the end of the month. A first-summer bird frequented the area from the 24th May to 5th June and another adult was seen from the 28th to 31st July. One the 1st August, three adults were present and stayed until the 3rd, after which an adult and juvenile were seen together on the 17th August. A first-summer bird flew north during a sea watch from the Marine Drive on the 9th August, as did a second-year bird on the 26th. An adult seen on several dates during September, October and November was probably the same individual, although two adults were at Scalby Mills on the 3rd and 18th October. An adult was seen feeding offshore from the Marine Drive on the 11th October and three adults were feeding at the harbour sewer outlet on the 17th October, where an adult was also seen on the 1st November.

Black-headed Gull

Between 3,000 and 5,000 were present at Scalby Mills during January to April. Thousands were seen whiffling-in to roost, wash and preen on the evening of the 12th April, forming rafts in the North Bay of over 12,000 birds. Large numbers frequented the area from July to December. 3,000 on the 20th July and 2,200 on the 6th December were maximum numbers.

Kittiwake

The species occurred normally in the area, although the unique colony on the Scarborough Castle Hill showed an increase over 1974 with a spread and approximate total of 2,800 occupied nests on the 31st May. Many joined the other gulls to bathe at the Scalby Beck outflow.

DISCUSSION

It is difficult to speculate why such large numbers of gulls now frequent the Scarborough district. This feeding area is most certainly ideal for such species, with two sewer outlets at Jackson's Bay, one at the east pier of the harbour, one at Cornelian Bay and another at Filey Brigg some 12 kms. to the south, plus the fact that fishing cobles and keel boats use both Scarborough and Filey harbours, creating a wealth of fish offal, obviously give added attraction. Scarborough rubbish tip also attracts hoardes of gulls. On some evenings thousands of gulls flight in to wash and preen in the fresh water flowing out from Scalby Beck over the littoral zone and it is this which is the great attraction. During the day, at the right time in relation to the tide, it is without doubt a very important assembly and resting area for the district.

In addition to these important factors, the weather conditions during the latter part of 1974 were probably the main reason for such unprecedented numbers of Glaucous and Iceland Gulls in the Scarborough district in early 1975. A northerly gale blew on the 24th September 1974, veered south and backed to north on the 25th. Strong northerly winds, gale force 9 at times, blew almost continuously up to mid-October, creating heavy seas. After southerly winds on the 17th to 20th October, again the wind backed north with more gales, force 9 at times, and by then creating complex weather charts and many gulls arrived during this period. Other species such as Shorelarks, Lapland Buntings, Snow Buntings and Little Auks were seen along the Yorkshire coast at the same time and may have been associated.

The sighting of so many Iceland Gulls at Scarborough during 1975 somewhat restored ones faith in the species and was a useful exercise in so far as ageing and identifying individuals was concerned. The differences in shape and structure as compared to Glaucous Gull could also be well appreciated and I am of the opinion that the difficulty in separating the two species, as is so often suggested, is largely unfounded. Some observers did have difficulty however and a few relevant comments may be in order.

One of the main arguments in suggesting the difficulty or possible confusion between Glaucous and Iceland is that supposedly small Glaucous can overlap in size with large Iceland. After many years watching, and seeing many Glaucous, small individuals are lacking and I doubt their very existence.

Apart from many other differences, Glaucous is a heavy and bulky bird by comparison and has a broader back. When sat on the water it sits lower and is more squat with a heavier bill and angular head. The Iceland is generally neater, more tapered, and in my experience usually slightly smaller than, or on few occasions the same size as, a small Herring Gull. *Never* larger than a Herring Gull. Its sits higher on the water than Glaucous and in that situation the angle of the tail in relation to the water is usually steeper. It has a smaller bill and a more rounded head.

First-winter birds never show any grey on the mantle and the brownish barrings and tips to the feathers are more *distinct* in pattern, whereas in second-year birds these are more *indistinct*. It might also be relevant to draw attention to the important feature of the primaries. In all stages of immature plumage of both Glaucous and Iceland these are always translucent, clear creamy white and always paler than the rest of the wing — a useful feature to remember if and when confronted with a leucistic or abberrant bird. The bill pattern is certainly a

useful feature when separating individuals and although it cannot be used to specifically age a bird it is nevertheless a guide. The typical bill pattern of a first-winter bird shows the distal half to two-thirds a blackish brown colour (appearing all dark at a distance), grading into a pinkish-grey proximal region. That of a second-winter shows less than half, usually a third tipped blackish, the proximal region being a greyish-horn colour (appearing more tipped and similar to first-winter Glaucous at a distance).

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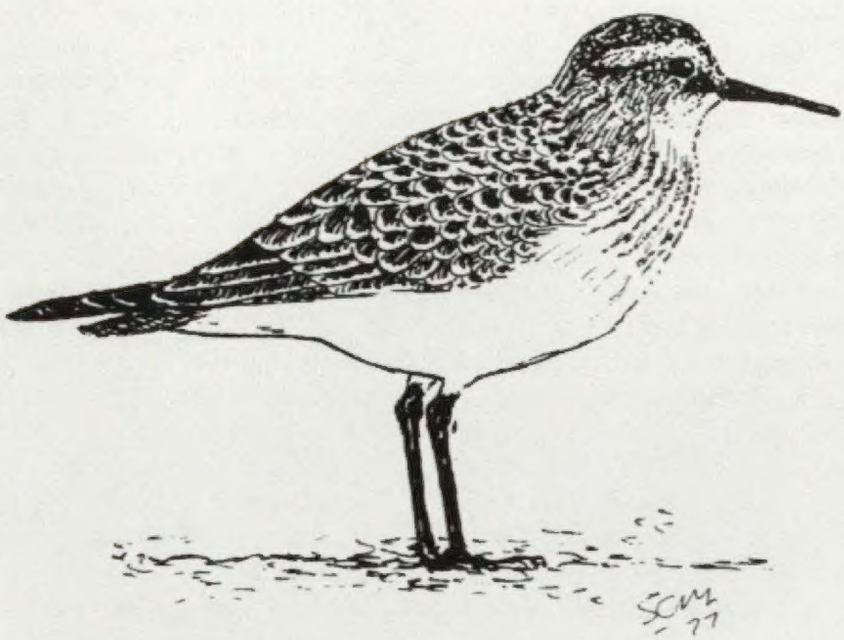
Scientific names of all the species mentioned in this paper can be found in the classified list elsewhere in this report.



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